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MISCELLANEOUS PROSE WORKS

By EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTTON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

MISCELLANEOUS

PROSE WORKS.

BY

EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTTON.

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PITT AND FOX.

[*First published in* 'THE QUARTERLY REVIEW,' *Sept. 1855.*]

(CONTINUED.)

PITT AND FOX.

[*Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox.* Edited by Lord John Russell. Vols. I. and II. London, 1853.]

(CONTINUED.)

"In a letter hitherto unpublished," observes Lord Mahon, in the 7th volume of his spirited and valuable History (p. 214), "Burke refers to his position at this time in a tone of great mortification, but with a kind of proud humility. 'You have been misinformed. I make no part of the ministerial arrangement. Something in the official line may probably be thought fit for my measure.'" And whatever Burke or his friends (Whig friends!) may have felt on the matter, there is no doubt that Mr. Prior, in his Life of the wronged great man, says truly, that his exclusion from the Cabinet was a matter of "considerable surprise," and his acquiescence in the slight "certainly hurt his political reputation."*

It must, however, be allowed, that the post assigned to Mr. Burke (that of the Pay Office) would have been the most lucrative in the gift of the Government upon one condition, viz. that he had forfeited all claim to public character in accepting its emoluments.

* Prior's 'Life of Burke,' vol. i. p. 403-5.

For those emoluments the Administrative Reformer was pledged to resign, — and he did so.

The Rockingham Administration, thus patched together, seems to have failed at once of parliamentary support. The government could not command the necessary attendance for the transaction of its ordinary business. "The thin attendances," says Fox, "which appear on most occasions is very disheartening. On the bill for securing Sir Thomas Rumbold's property,* we were only 36 to 33." The insubordination of dependants was notable. On that very question the Attorney and Solicitor General were both against the Government leader. On another occasion Dundas, still Lord-Advocate, not perhaps in the best humour that he was not promoted to the Duchy of Lancaster instead of Dunning, galled Mr. Fox by a speech, "most offensive," complains the minister, "to me personally, by marking in the most pointed way the different opinion he entertained of the purity of Pitt's intentions and mine." Burke himself, not wholly uninfluenced, we suspect, by irritation at the slight, of which he was too proud to complain, dealt a deadly side-blow to the Cabinet that excluded him. Mr. Fox had declared himself in favour of Parliamentary Reform, but, praising Mr. Pitt for his motion to that effect, hinted that it did not go far enough. Burke, with difficulty restrained from appearing in the House upon that occasion, came down a few nights after (on Alderman Sawbridge's

* This bill was important to the government measures; it was for restraining Sir Thomas Rumbold from quitting the *kingdom* or alienating his property pending the inquiry *respecting his* conduct at Madras.

motion for shortening parliaments), "attacked Mr. Pitt in a scream of passion, and not only swore that Parliament was, and always had been, precisely what it ought to be, but that all persons who thought of reforming it wanted to overturn the constitution." Perhaps, however, in this censure Burke exempted the intentions of Mr. Fox at the expense of that statesman's sincerity, for certainly neither then, nor at any time, had Mr. Fox any very serious intention of reforming Parliament, whatever he might say to the contrary.* Mr. Fox was sometimes less ingenuous to the public than he was to his friends. Now, too, the ordinary punishment of those who are over-lavish in popular professions when storming a government befell the successors to that troublesome fortress. Fox had boastingly implied, that, if *he* had the official power, he possessed the requisite means to detach the Dutch from the French. The Dutch received his diplomatic overtures with a frigidity that belied his predictions. He turned to the Americans; there, at least, the eloquence of their advocate was sure of a cordial recep-

* "Fox, than whom there has seldom existed a more hearty anti-reformer," writes Lord Dudley to the Bishop of Llandaff. This assertion oversteps the exact truth; but according to the concurrent testimony of those best acquainted with Fox's genuine opinions, and indeed according to some passages in his own Correspondence, it is evident that he regarded the question of Parliamentary Reform with considerable scepticism as to its benefits or necessity; he looked on it chiefly with reference to the interests of his party — a change of suit which the country could very well do without, but which ought from time to time to be taken down from the shelf — aired, paraded, brushed — and put away again.

tion, when commissioned to pacify and anxious to concede. Not a whit of it. The Americans were as sullen as the Dutchmen were phlegmatic. The minister charged with the glorious task of raising the dignity of England in the eyes of foreign states, stooped to sue the Russian Czarina and the Austrian Emperor for their mediation between the parent country and the triumphant colonists. The Czarina replied by a personal compliment, the Emperor by a national insult. France and Spain, though in the last extreme of financial distress, refused to accede to the seductions of the Whig peace-maker. Peace falls rarely into the lap of those who ask for it on their knees. Peace has no force in her eloquence unless the trumpet precedes her heralds, and her flag does not carry respect if it droops from the crutch of a beggar. Just retribution! Salutary warning to those who depreciate the power of their country when seeking to damage a government! Men may justly advocate peace, however unpopular, when they hold war inexpedient or unrighteous. But in doing so, patriots will be wary how they tell the enemy that their country has no alternative between peace and destruction. Fox had so often declared in Parliament that England could not encounter her foes, that her foes believed him when he came in the authority of a King's Minister with propositions of peace.

But the volumes edited by Lord John Russell contain a document which seems to us so to derogate from Mr. Fox's character as an English statesman, and his position as a Minister of the Crown, that even his warmest admirers may cease to regret that the dignity of the country was not long committed to his hands.

"It was," says Mr. Allen, "one of his (Mr. Fox's) first

attempts to form a defensive confederacy in the North, by uniting Russia and Prussia with England, in opposition to the exorbitant ambition and insolent pretensions of the House of Bourbon. With that view he seems to have written the following letter to the King of Prussia. Through what channel it was to be conveyed does not appear, nor is it certain that it was ever sent; though, from allusions in the following year to what had passed at this period, it probably was."

Willingly will we give to Mr. Fox's memory the benefit of the doubt. But the letter is printed from the draft in Mr. Fox's own handwriting; and we blush to think that a Minister of England could even have dreamed of placing before the eyes of a foreign potentate words that so depreciated his country, and so debased his King. A few extracts from this epistle, to which we can give no epithet but abject, entitled "Private Letter of Mr. Fox, written in order to be communicated to the King of Prussia," will suffice to show the intention and substance of the whole composition. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs thus begins: —

"The assurances that you have given me, Monsieur, of the friendship which the King, your master, bears to the English nation, encourages me to write to you from my own impulse, and without having consulted any one on the actual state of affairs in this country. We are overwhelmed by the number and force of our enemies; and however becoming and glorious may be the defence that we count upon making against a Confederation as powerful as that which attacks us, it is to be feared that this glory will cost us dear, and that we shall find ourselves exhausted by the efforts we make, even if

events take a turn more favourable than we have reason to hope."*

Was this the language likely to secure to England the active friendship of a man like Frederick the Great?

"It is true that the embarrassments that beset us are only the fruits of the numberless faults we have committed, and the bad system of policy we have long followed. But it is also true that, whatever be the cause, it is of infinite importance to all the nations of Europe, more especially to those of the North, to prevent our succumbing to the House of Bourbon, which looks forward to a despotism over Europe with views much more solid and much better founded than at the time of Louis XIV., when all conceived of it so well-founded a jealousy."**

* "Les assurances que vous m'avez données, Monsieur, de l'amitié que le Roi votre maître porte à la nation anglaise, m'encouragent à vous écrire de mon chef, et sans avoir consulté personne, avec la plus entière confiance, sur l'état actuel des affaires de ce pays-ci. Nous sommes accablés du nombre et de la force de nos ennemis, et quelque belle et glorieuse que sera la défense que nous comptons faire contre une confédération aussi puissante que celle qui nous attaque, il est à craindre, que cette gloire ne nous coûte bien cher, et que nous ne nous trouvions épuisés par les efforts que nous ferons quand même les évènemens prissent une tournure plus favorable que nous n'avons raison d'espérer."

** "Il est vrai que les embarras où nous nous trouvons ne sont que le fruit des fautes sans nombre que nous avons faites, et du mauvais système de politique que nous avons dès longtems suivi; mais il est vrai aussi que quelle qu'en soit la cause, il importe infiniment à toutes les nations de

The impolicy with which this dishonouring fear is confessed to a foreign power is worthy of the extravagant assertion, that the Bourbons were less formidable under Louis XIV. than under Louis XVI. We can imagine Frederick's sneer at his correspondent's sagacity: —

"We embroiled ourselves with our colonies without reason, and after the rupture we conducted ourselves in the same spirit of imprudence and error as that which occasioned it. . . . . We have had the madness to plunge into the war with Holland without reason, and almost without pretext. It is with shame, no doubt, that I make a recital so humiliating to my country; but" — (the excuse is noble!) — "the more we have been feeble, the more it becomes the duty and the interest of those who interest themselves in us to aid us as much by counsels as by other means."*

Did George III. call Mr. Fox to his cabinet to supplicate the counsels of another sovereign? But Mr. Fox thus additionally proves how he merits the con-

l'Europe, et surtout à celles du Nord, d'empêcher que nous ne succombions à la maison de Bourbon, qui vise au despotisme de l'Europe avec des vues bien plus solides et mieux fondées que du tems de Louis XIV., quand tout le monde en avoit une jalousie si fondée."

* "Nous nous sommes brouillés avec nos colonies sans raison, et après la rupture nous nous sommes conduits avec ce même esprit d'imprudence et d'erreur qui l'avoit occasionnée. . . . . Nous avons eu la folie de nous plonger dans la guerre d'Hollande absolument sans raison et quasi sans prétexte. C'est avec honte, sans doute, que je fais un récit si humiliant pour ma nation, mais plus nous avons été faibles, plus il devient le devoir et l'intérêt de ceux qui s'intéressent à nous, de nous aider tant de conseils que d'autres moyens."

fidence of his master, by revealing to the King of Prussia his estimate of the King of England —

"The consequences of the evil counsels that have been incessantly given to the King from the commencement of his reign, and to imprint as much as possible on his mind, are at present only too apparent to all the world. But, unfortunately, the evil is only discovered just at a time when it is very difficult to remedy it. What is to be done for that purpose?"*

Mr. Fox, then, with a naïve simplicity, proceeds to state the difficulty of making any honourable peace with Holland, America, France, and Spain, and the greater difficulty of prosecuting against those powers any successful war; and reducing the gallant monarchy he represents to the condition of a despairing suppliant, exposing all her wounds, rending her purple into rags, and covering her crown with dust and ashes, thus bids her, through his mouth, address the most heartless and cynical philosopher who ever despised the weak and respected the strong: —

"Whom then address, if not him whose friendship has availed us so much in more fortunate times; who knows perfectly the embarrassment in which we find ourselves — who

* "Les suites des mauvais conseils qu'on n'a cessé de donner au Roi depuis le commencement de son règne, et d'imprimer tant qu'on a pu dans son esprit, ne sont à présent que trop apparentes à tout le monde. Mais malheureusement le mal n'est découvert que dans un tems où il est bien difficile d'y remédier. Qu'y faire?"

has the enlightenment to penetrate its causes — who *alone* can indicate to us the means by which to extricate ourselves, and who, doubtless, recalls with *complaisance* the time when the two nations acted in concert — an epoch certainly not the least illustrious of his reign? It is, then, from him that I dare demand counsel and support in the present circumstances."*

Mr. Fox, then suggesting, with infinite humility, some general notions upon the objects to be attained — and intimating that the first step which his Prussian Majesty could make in our favour would be to persuade Russia "to sustain the honour of her mediation, and to be a little more attentive to the affairs of England than she had been" — winds up by deferring, nevertheless, all such preliminary measures to "the prudence, justice, and depth of intellect" which distinguish this foreign despot; and repeats that he, Member of the Cabinet, has written without concert with his colleagues or with any one.

Now, granting that all said upon the exhaustion of our resources, or the evil of the counsels which our Sovereign had imbibed, were perfectly true, the place to state such facts might be in the Parliament of Eng-

* "A qui donc s'adresser si ce n'est à lui dont l'amitié nous a tant valu dans des tems plus heureux, qui connaît parfaitement l'embarras où nous nous trouvons, qui a des lumières pour en pénétrer les causes, qui seul peut nous indiquer les moyens d'en sortir, et qui sans doute se rappelle avec complaisance le tems où les deux nations agissaient en concert, époque certainement pas la moins illustre de son règne. C'est donc à lui que j'ose demander conseil et appui dans les circonstances présentes."

land, where Mr. Pitt would have stated them with crest erect. But surely no Minister of the Crown — no Englishman proud of England — should have made a foreign potentate the father confessor to the infirmities of his country and the errors of his King.

Whig historians complain that Lord Shelburne was too suspicious of Mr. Fox in his foreign diplomacy — George III. too narrow-minded to appreciate the genius of so judicious a counsellor — but let any high-spirited Englishman read that letter, from which we have quoted not unfairly, and on which Lord John Russell, we regret to say, utters not one word of concern or reproach, and we suspect that he will acquit Lord Shelburne, and even pardon George III. No success could attend overtures so abject to a monarch so selfish. Mr. Allen observes drily, "that the King of Prussia was too old and too cautious to embark in new and hazardous undertakings."

While abroad our affairs were thus circumstanced and thus conducted, the Rockingham Administration but partially attempted the domestic reform its members in opposition had so eloquently urged. Considering all that had been said against the increased and increasing influence of the Crown — when the evil was only met to the extent of a bill that disqualified contractors for seats in Parliament, and revenue-officers for votes in parliamentary elections — the public felt that the quantity of the wool was scarcely worth the loudness of the cry. But the measure was bold and sweeping, compared to the timidity and smallness of the economical reforms that had stormed the last Government with the swell of a torrent and oozed from its successors in the penury of driblets. Burke's boasted

saving of 200,000*l.* a year dwindled down to a sum little over 73,000*l.* The Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall remained to shame the felicitous humour with which the orator had described their futility. The ordnance-office, the mint, various places in the household denounced by Burke's eloquence, were spared by his amendments; — if odious to patriotism, they were convenient to patronage. Burke had the mournful consolation of reforming his own department. No similar consolation was sought by his brother reformers. If the economical reforms, under a Whig premier, were timorously conceived and sparingly executed, the administration of the finances, under a Whig Chancellor of the Exchequer, was yet more discreetly free from the rashness of improvement. For an office at that time requiring no ordinary genius, the party of the Great Houses had naturally enough selected a Cavendish, distinguished alike by sobriety of manners and mediocrity of intellect. This amiable nobleman — familiarly styled "the learned Canary Bird" — whom Horace Walpole has unjustly accused of ambition, had, not without well-founded diffidence, yielded to the pressure of friends nobly anxious to place the national resources under the control of a man whose connexions might reflect their own elevation on the funds. The full results of so judicious a selection were not apparent till the appointment was renewed under the Coalition Administration.

We have thus dwelt at some length on the characteristics of the Rockingham Government, because it is necessary to see all that it promised to effect before we can fully comprehend the apathy with which an ungrateful country subsequently resigned itself to ad-

ministrations from which the Whigs were excluded, and because a due contemplation of the idiosyncrasies peculiar to "the Great Houses," in the junction between the Whigs proper and the disciples of Lord Chatham, may throw some light on the interior of a more recent Cabinet,* in which the Whigs divided with men who were to Peel what the Shelburnites were to Chatham, the honours their genealogy entitled them to monopolise, and have never been quite right in the head since they were unhappily seized with that fit of condescension —

"Nulli sua signa, suusque
Ductor, — eant taciti passim!"

In this brief period of power Mr. Fox vainly concentrated the various energies of his genius. He renounced his gay habits — that desultory attention to business, which passed under the name of indolence — he was indefatigable in the transaction of official affairs — more than at any time of his life he kept his warm and impulsive temper under dignified control. His eloquence was less vehement, but not less effective. Yet even as a parliamentary leader he must have failed somehow in that indescribable yet indispensable quality which conciliates or commands into discipline inert or unruly members. With a government just formed; in the very honeymoon of official possession, we have seen that he could not enforce a requisite attendance. His subordinates were mutineers. He neither awed the House like Chatham, nor soothed it like North. The Commons admired a man of genius, they did not

* *The* Coalition Government under Lord Aberdeen.

bow to a master. Inferior though Lord Shelburne was to him as a parliamentary orator, and small though in numbers and in property as was the Shelburne party in comparison with that of which Fox was the organ, Lord Shelburne was more than Fox's match in the Cabinet. True, the King was inimical to Fox, but by one of those grievous errors in conduct by which the great orator belied his repute for good sense, and counteracted the efforts of his vehement ambition, he seated the King's dislike to him in the deepest recess of the human heart. The Prince of Wales treated his father with an irreverence which furnished every club-house with pungent anecdotes. In becoming the father's official councillor Mr. Fox remained the son's chosen companion. The King perhaps overrated Fox's influence over the heir-apparent, and unjustly ascribed to the example of the matured man of intellect and fashion, the excesses of a youth who coupled contempt the most galling for his father with admiration the most glowing for the friend with whom his pleasures were shared, and by whom his opinions were coloured. But it is obvious that there was only one condition on which Mr. Fox could have united the confidence of the King with the intimacy of the Prince, viz. a reconciliation between the two. This he took no direct pains to effect; and after conceding all that can be said on behalf of the warmth of Mr. Fox's personal friendships — a friendship which impairs utility, implicates character, is founded on no esteem, and endeared by no worthy association, still remains a grievous error of conduct in a man who, embracing the stern career, and coveting the high rewards of a practical statesman, must learn to adapt all his means to the attainment of no

cessary objects, and sacrifice everything but his honour and his conscience to the service which unites the advancement of his ambition with the interests of his country.

Meanwhile, between the Government and the Opposition, in armed neutrality, stood William Pitt. He had been offered by Lord Shelburne — not by the conclave of the Great Houses — various subordinate places in the new Government. One of them, that of Irish Vice-Treasurer, was very lucrative, and William Pitt was very poor. He had too much reliance on himself to accept a subordinate office. He had said so in the House three weeks before Lord Rockingham formed his Cabinet, and the wits smiled at the young man's arrogance. If we are to believe Horace Walpole and an anecdote transmitted to us at third hand by Lord Albemarle, he repented the boast as soon as it passed his lips; yet the boast was wise in itself, for genius is a commodity of which the commonalty of men do not know the precise value, and its price in the market is very much regulated by the estimate set on it by the possessor himself. But the isolated position in which the young orator thus placed himself was one that required, to maintain it, not only lofty capacities, but extraordinary prudence. All those with whom he had voted since his entrance into Parliament were supporters of that Government from which he remained aloof. The Opposition was composed of the friends of Lord North, whose Administration he had assisted to overthrow. Never did any man of mark and repute stand in Parliament so wholly without the aid of party — the advice of friends. And to make the situation *yet more* difficult, never in that House, in which the

habit of affairs and knowledge of the world seem qualities for sustained success, more essential than the learning of the mere scholar or the eloquence of the mere orator, — did a man aspire to a foremost rank with so slender an experience of parliamentary business, and so stinted a commerce with the social varieties of mankind. Yet here he most succeeded, where Mr. Fox, in the maturity of his manhood, trained in political conflict, and familiarized by travel, by his pleasures not less than his studies, to human character in all its colours, and human life in all its gradations, notably failed, — viz. in the seizure of circumstances, the practical sagacity to which we would give the name of "*conduct*," and by which results that amaze the strongest are obtained, less by violence of effort than by equilibrium of forces.

The friends of Parliamentary Reform, in a meeting held at the Duke of Richmond's, had agreed to place that important question in the hands of Mr. Pitt; perhaps it was the only matter connected with the question on which they were agreed. A letter from Lord Rockingham to Mr. Milnes (great-uncle of the accomplished member for Pontefract), who enjoyed the reputation of influencing more Dissenters and drinking more port-wine than any man in the county of York, shows how much confusion prevailed on the subject, whether in the mind of the writer or the projects of the Reformers.* In fact, the supporters of Parliamentary Reform consisted mainly of two great divisions — the

* 'Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham,' by Lord Albemarle, vol. II. p. 375.

impracticable and the insincere. Pitt treated the difficulties that beset the question with consummate skill in reference to his own views and position. He contrasted the insincere by his earnestness and the impracticable by his moderation. He limited the object of his motion to the appointment of a committee of inquiry, and prefaced it by a speech, in which there was a marked avoidance of all the theories espoused by the Democratic party, and a very temperate but manly exposition of the abuses he desired to remedy. Politicians may differ as to the soundness of the ideas on this subject which Mr. Pitt at that time entertained, but those who accuse him of deserting the question in later life should at least remember that his idea of a Parliamentary Reform was always eminently conservative. His views indeed are only indicated in his first speech; they were, not long after, made unmistakably clear. In suppressing the rotten boroughs, though he would have unquestionably diminished the Government influences, he would have proportionally increased those which protect national institutions. In every form of government the enduring element is in the cultivators of the soil. With them rests the most stubborn resistance to the encroachments of tyranny on the one hand, of popular licence on the other. Pitt's theory of Reform, which was to give to the counties the members taken from the close boroughs, might be fairly open to the objection that it did not allow sufficient room and play to the innovating spirit which rises amidst urban populations, and is no less essential to progress and energy than a conservative equilibrium, through agrarian representation, is to safety and duration; but it does not subject him to the charge of advocating at

one time the Democratic innovations he resisted at another. His views, then, were not less opposed to those of the Duke of Richmond than they were subsequently to those of Mr. Grey.

The Government reeled under a motion in which its supporters divided against its leader in the Commons and vanquished him. "Our having been beat upon Pitt's motion," writes Mr. Fox (who voted for it, but, if treating of the Cabinet, should rather have said *my* than *our*), "will, in my opinion, produce many more bad consequences than many people seem to suppose." A little later Mr. Pitt placed Fox himself on the unpopular side, supporting Lord Mahon's bill against bribery and expense in the election of members, which Mr. Fox defended by his speech, and which, despite of Mr. Fox, had a majority of one in its favour. It was withdrawn on re-committal by the rejection of its severer clauses — that, in especial, which forbade a candidate to pay for the conveyance to the poll of non-resident electors; Mr. Fox on this occasion having the large ministerial majority of twenty-six!

But while thus fearlessly advocating his opinions, Mr. Pitt was singularly felicitous in making no enemies. The Government were compelled, and the Opposition were eager, to praise the man who stood committed to neither; and the public, long accustomed to see its ablest favourites going all lengths with a party, learned to regard with esteem this solitary thinker, who, exposing the jobs of the Court, spoke in respect, never servile, of the King, and who, advocating popular opinions, never pushed them into heated extravagance. It was, apart from his eloquence, this apparent fairness

of intellect — this combination of courage and prudence — this superiority over the ordinary motives of hackneyed politicians — this freedom from party spleen — this indifference, not to personal ambition but to personal profit — this severe independence of spirit akin to this singleness of action — which fixed the eyes of the country upon the young lawyer who preferred even a briefless attendance at Westminster Hall to the emoluments of office not accompanied with the responsibilities of power.

Meanwhile "the progress of dissension and mutual alienation in the Ministry" made inevitable the speedy dissolution of a body so organically afflicted. The main political difference between Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox may serve to illustrate that peculiarity in the character of the latter which we have before intimated, and which induced him to prefer the maintenance of an abstract principle to the practical consideration of what was best for his country. Mr. Fox was for making the unconditional declaration of American independence previous to any treaty of peace; Lord Shelburne was for equally conceding the declaration, but for making it conditional on the absolute conclusion of the peace. If Mr. Fox had been the philosophical advocate of the human race, we think Mr. Fox would have been right in his view; but as the minister charged with saving the honour and guarding the interests of England, there can be no doubt that the course he preferred was the more wounding to the national dignity and the more careless of the national welfare. For it was surely less galling to the spirit of the mother country, and placed *her in a* higher position before the eyes of the conti-

nental powers, to recognise the independence of her ancient colony as an essential article in the general pacification of Europe, than to separate the revolt of the colonists from the hostilities of the European States, and acknowledge by an unconditional surrender the defeat of her arms and the injustice of her cause. To abandon all claim to a supremacy for which, right or wrong, its people had long contended with an ardour that justified the pertinacity of its King, was necessarily a heavy blow to the majesty of a state that could only be great in proportion as it commanded the moral respect of neighbours with larger armaments and more extensive dominions; but the blow was less accompanied by contumely if the concession were made not alone to the demands of victorious insurgents, but to those of combined nations and for the restoration of universal peace: while, as to the question of that presiding regard for the national interest and safety, which the councillors of all states at war with others have no right to relinquish for the abstract principle of the schools, the reasoning which General Conway addressed to the Cabinet seems unanswerable, viz., "that the acknowledgment of independence might be a leading argument with the Americans for making peace with us; but should they refuse peace, should we not weaken our right of warring on them by having acknowledged their independence?" A difference of this nature between Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox was naturally aggravated by the conflicting duties of their offices: Mr. Fox, as one of the Foreign Secretaries, having his correspondent at Paris in Mr. Thomas Grenville, who was authorized by the entire Cabinet to negotiate

peace with M. de Vergennes; and Lord Shelburne as the other Foreign Secretary (under whose department the Colonies actually were), having his correspondent in Mr. Oswald, who had previously been in communication with Franklin, and whom Franklin himself especially desired to retain and avowedly preferred to Mr. Grenville. "That," in the words of Lord Holland, "Lord Shelburne discussed, entertained, and communicated through Mr. Oswald with Franklin several projects of the latter without communicating them to his colleagues, and especially the strange one of ceding Canada to the United States, is clear enough." But Lord Holland omits to observe, on the other hand, that Mr. Fox was not only holding private communications with Mr. Grenville, equally unknown to his colleagues, but that he had been no less privately communicating with the Secretary of Ireland unknown to Lord Shelburne, with whose unquestionable department he thus interfered; and that he had written and, according to Mr. Allen, had sent to the King of Prussia, a document involving the most obvious responsibilities owed by a member of the Cabinet to his Sovereign, unknown to a single one of the other advisers of the Crown. Granting that Lord Shelburne was not sufficiently ingenuous, Mr. Fox, therefore, seems to us to have disqualified himself from complaints of reserve, still less of duplicity. And after wading through all the tedious and complicated evidences on either side, we think the most that can be said against Lord Shelburne is this, that, in his anxiety to obtain the best terms he could for his sovereign and his country, he sought with too *guarded* a secresy to prevent Mr. Fox from concluding

what he held to be the worst.* Be that as it may, Mr. Fox was outvoted in the Cabinet upon the construction to be put on a minute of instructions to Mr. Grenville, which embodied the whole public question at issue between himself and Lord Shelburne, General Conway (on the ground we have stated) giving his casting vote against Mr. Fox's opinions. From that moment the great orator resolved to retire. According to the best authority (the journal of his friend General Fitzpatrick), he notified this intention on Sunday, June 30th. The next day, after a week's illness, the Marquis of Rockingham died.

Horace Walpole considers it "a puerile want of policy in Lord Rockingham's friends not to have seized the opportunity of his lordship's approaching dissolution to take measures for naming his successor." The reproach is scarcely merited. Lord Rockingham's friends were much too disunited for such amicable preliminary concert; but no sooner did the fatal event compel the Great Houses to elect their new representative, than they formed their decision with the consistency of rigid sectaries, and adhered to its consequences with the tenacity of faithful martyrs. Who, in times so disordered, was the fittest person to pre-

* For, as to the cession of Canada, no one can suspect Lord Shelburne or George III. of having seriously inclined to such a proposal. It was competent to Franklin to make it, but there is not the slightest evidence that Lord Shelburne for an instant favoured the idea. And he might have very good reasons in his disapproval of it not to submit the proposal to a cabinet in which he might fear it would find supporters.

side over the councils of England? — evidently a minister who could resemble the illustrious defunct in his pre-eminent attribute of being at once the greatest lord and the dullest man. Accordingly, within two days of Lord Rockingham's death, they set up for first minister the Duke of Portland. "True that his fortune, though noble, was considerably impaired; in *other* respects," says Walpole, with unconscious irony, "his character was unimpeachable. But," adds that sarcastic observer, "he had never attempted to show any parliamentary abilities, nor had the credit of possessing any. Nor did it redound to the honour of his faction that in such momentous times they could furnish their country with nothing but a succession of mutes." Mutes! but that was the merit of the faction. The faction had more than enough of talkers, and no talker liked to allow another talker to be set above him. All jealousies could be best settled by selecting a man who might be chosen for those qualities by which no one who plumes himself on intellect ever boasts to be distinguished. The marvellous abilities of Mr. Fox appeared to some few of his personal friends — and, to our amaze, they appear still to the cool retrospect of Lord John Russell — to constitute superior claims to the succession of Lord Rockingham. Mr. Fox himself knew his party too well to misjudge so egregiously the qualities that guided their preference. He was aware, to use his own expression, "that he was quite out of the question;" nor did the faction as a body demur to the justice of that modest conviction. The ruined cadet of a race which could not on the father's side trace its pedigree beyond three generations might do very well to lead the Commons of

England; but, as First Lord of the Treasury, his were not precisely the hands from which the Great Houses would feel a pride in receiving garters and gold sticks. But Mr. Fox, on his mother's side, had an uncle of ducal rank and royal blood — an uncle of manners the most noble, of bearing the most chivalric — "of great capacity for business, and a still greater appetite for employing it." The Duke of Richmond, to whom we refer, did not, therefore, like Mr. Fox, think himself "out of the question." But the Duke had two or three trifling defects, which combined to unfit him for the choice of the Great Houses. In spite of his rank his opinions were popular; and in spite of his graceful manners and a "thousand virtues" he himself was just the reverse. He was "intractable," he had a will of his own; he was apt to have "speculative visions, and was particularly romantic upon the article of representation." In short, the Duke of Richmond was set aside. And Fox and the Duke being thus dissolved in the Whig crucible, nothing remained but that *caput mortuum* his Grace of Portland.

The intrigues of this interesting crisis have an exquisite air of high comedy. The Whig junto having agreed that the Duke of Richmond was to concede his claim to the Duke of Portland, who, above all men, was selected to tell him so? — The Whigs appointed Mr. Fox; and, "being his Grace's nephew, the Duke," says Walpole, with the shrewdness of a man of the world, "was most offended with *him*." With the *bonhommie* of a child Mr. Fox undertook the task of alienating from his party one of its ablest chiefs, and from himself his most powerful relation. Horace Wal-

pole was present in one of the meetings between uncle and nephew, and informs us that "he entreated both to argue without passion, and to remember that, being such near relatives, they must come together again." "I did prevent any warmth," adds that most cynical of peacemakers, "and they parted civilly, though equally discontented with each other." It must have been a yet more amusing scene "when Lord Shelburne was desired by the voice of the party to acquaint King George III. that the Whigs recommended the Duke of Portland to his Majesty to succeed Lord Rockingham." The Earl had previously foiled Mr. Fox's opposition in the Cabinet with a sort of well-bred humour which seems to imply a cordial enjoyment of his part in the play. When General Conway, on whom the Rockingham faction, despite his superb pretensions to be above all considerations of party, had certainly counted as their own, gave in that Cabinet of nine his independent vote, much to that faction's annoyance, quoth Lord Shelburne aside to Mr. Fox, "That innocent man never perceives that he has the casting vote of the Cabinet!" Again says the Earl smilingly to his baffled rival, "Very provoking, I must own, for you to see Lord Camden and the Duke of Grafton come down with their lounging opinions to outvote you in Cabinet." Accordingly, with his accustomed dry delight in a joke, Lord Shelburne accepted the mission to report to the King the decrees of the Whigs; and, returning, reported to the delegates that his Majesty had been graciously pleased to appoint as First Lord of the Treasury — the Earl of Shelburne himself.

Though the announcement could not have been *unexpected*, it produced the effect of a bomb upon a

company of gazers only prepared for the ascent of a rocket. Fox would listen to no remonstrance; he carried at once the seals of his office to the King, complained loudly of Lord Shelburne's "treacheries," and proclaimed, as it were, his contempt for the royal favour he had lost, or his hopes in royal favour prospective, by receiving at dinner that very day the Prince of Wales as his guest, and allowing his partisans to circulate the soothing intelligence that the Heir Apparent regarded "the Rockingham party as the best friends of the country." Lord John Cavendish alone of the members of the Cabinet imitated the example of Mr. Fox. The three other Whigs by profession, Keppel, Conway, and the Duke of Richmond, remained in office; each professing to share Fox's distrust of Lord Shelburne, but each, by remaining, and upon the avowed grounds of public duty, implying a censure on those who retired. Never before did a parliamentary leader make a movement of equal importance with so little approval and so scanty a following, or upon grounds less calculated to compensate in the sympathy of the people for the detriment inflicted upon party. "My opinion," writes Lord Temple to his brother Thomas,* "is that Fox has undone himself with the public, and his most intimate friends seem of the same opinion." The blow to the Whigs which the hasty back-stroke of their chief inflicted was indeed so mighty, that it scattered them right and left. The policy of the Whigs as a party was evidently either to absorb the Shelburnites into their own body, or to destroy Lord Shelburne's personal influence as an ob-

* 'Courts and Cabinets of George III.,' vol. i. p. 52.

stacle to that fusion. The course taken by Mr. Fox transferred to Lord Shelburne all whom interest, ambition, or sense of public duty enlisted on the side of the Government. And by that single act Mr. Fox, viewing him only as a party chief, lost at least one-third of the numbers, and a far greater proportionate amount in property, rank, and character, of the party committed to his guidance. His resignation may have been necessitated. Mr. Fox might feel that he could not with honour serve under Lord Shelburne. But since so many of his friends retained their offices and remonstrated against his own decision, prudence demanded that his retirement should be made with temperance and a dignity. Preserving in parliament the attitude of vigilant neutrality, he might thus have retained his friends, whether in or out of office, while asserting his own independence. But Mr. Fox here manifested to the fullest extent his characteristic errors of conduct. He began at once "an opposition wofully thinned and disconnected," * and to that opposition he gave all the rancour and vehemence which could justify his opponents in ascribing his motives to personal spleen and mortified ambition. On this score Lord John Russell writes well: — "Conceding this point" [that Mr. Fox's resignation was almost inevitable], "it must be owned that the field of battle was the worst that could be chosen. Lord Shelburne, the friend and colleague of Lord Chatham, the Secretary of State under Lord Rockingham, a man of tried acquirements and undoubted abilities, was personally far superior to the Duke of

* Sheridan's letter to Thomas Grenville, 'Courts and Cabinets of George III.' vol. i. p. 53.

Portland as a candidate for the office of prime minister." — "The choice of a prime minister against the choice of the Crown, and that in the person of a man whose rank and fair character were his only recommendations, appeared to the public an unwarrantable pretension, inspired by narrow jealousies and aristocratic prejudices."

This was, however, the ground which Mr. Fox selected. From this ground he fulmined on the Government — in which the most eminent of his recent colleagues remained, which a large and influential number of his recent followers supported — an artillery of eloquence startling by the explosion of its powder, harmless by the misdirection of its ball. He not only accused Lord Shelburne of duplicity to himself, but insulted those just severed from his side by declaring it was impossible to act under the Earl with honour or benefit to the country." He ventured to prophesy, "not only that Lord Shelburne would still be opposed to the independence of America, but that in order to maintain himself in power the Earl would be capable of that extremity of baseness — a coalition with Lord North!"

What followed is notorious. Mr. Fox himself coalesced with Lord North; and that coalition was first proclaimed to the world in denouncing the treaties for a peace which Mr. Fox had so solemnly invoked throughout the phases of his opposition to Lord North's Government, and which, as a minister himself, he had pushed diplomacy to the extreme of supplication in order to effect! The peace itself was more honourable to the country than that which Mr. Fox would have effected. Lord Shelburne carried his point. The acknowledgment of American

independence was made by an article in the treaty, not by a previous declaration. Nothing further was heard of the cession of Canada. But he who wishes to see the vindication of that peace and its provisions must turn to the great speech in their defence against Fox, which, in tone and argument, is one of the noblest ever uttered by Pitt. Let us now glance for a moment over the condition of parties before Fox committed himself to the formal coalition with Lord North. In point of numbers the new Government was far weaker than that out of which it had grown. According to a calculation made to Gibbon, who reports it, the supporters of Ministers did not muster more than 140; the Fox party was estimated at 90; Lord North's at 120, the Members not thus classified were considered uncertain. But there were an energy and a decision of purpose in the foreign negotiations of Lord Shelburne's Government which had not characterised its predecessor. And the Earl had overcome the strongest difficulty of all in the way of peace — *atrocem animum Catonis* — the stubborn reluctance of George III. Vigour, indeed, was Lord Shelburne's eminent attribute. "I will do him justice," says Lord Temple (after censuring the Earl's vanity and personal arrogance), "in acknowledging his merit as one of the quickest and most indefatigable ministers that this country ever saw." The Cabinet itself was but provisional; Admiral Keppel soon left it. "The Duke of Richmond," says Lord Temple, "only determined to go on till the first breach on fair public grounds;" and (according to Horace Walpole) "told the King that, though he would keep the Ordnance if the King desired it, he would go no more to council." Of Lord Shelburne's own special party, Lord

Camden, pleading his advanced years, would only pledge himself to retain office for three months, and the Duke of Grafton went discontented into the country, and subsequently left the Government just before its dissolution. Here Lord Shelburne's defect in conciliating those with whom he had to deal became seriously apparent. Only on one member of this Cabinet, except his personal friend Dunning (now in the Upper House as Lord Ashburton), could the chief minister count with confidence, viz. the young man whom he had at once raised to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Pitt. The leadership of the House of Commons was nominally vested in Thomas Townshend, Secretary of State; but it was Pitt who took the prominent part in the defence of the Government and the conduct of business. But, great as his own powers were, Pitt himself felt that a ministry thus formed and supported could not last. The peace, however necessary, was in itself unpopular. The Government could only secure a majority in the House of Commons in its favour by a junction with one of the two parties which were both convinced of the impracticability of continued war — the Foxites and the Northites. Lord Shelburne was urged by some of his friends to coalesce with the last, by others to unite with the first. The Earl was not unwilling to propitiate Lord North, but on the condition of not placing him in the Cabinet. Dundas sounded Lord North on this head; "but," says Walpole, "Lord Shelburne, foolishly, meanwhile, making the Duke of Rutland not only Lord Steward but of the Cabinet Council, filled up one of the best places with which he might have trafficked with Opposition." So the overtures to Lord North, which were never

cordial nor direct, failed of effect. "Indeed," says Bishop Tomline* (a better authority here than Walpole), "as Lord North was fully aware of Mr. Pitt's positive determination to have no political connexion with him, and he could not but know that a perfectly good understanding subsisted between Lord Shelburne and Mr. Pitt, he must therefore have been convinced that any union between himself and the present Ministers must have been utterly impracticable." It is true that the more personal reasons which might well weigh with Mr. Fox in not accepting as a colleague in council the man whom he had so short a time before threatened with the block, were not applicable to Pitt, who had indulged in no similar language and received only pointed compliments from the exminister, — but by that intuitive sympathy with public opinion, which constituted more than half his political wisdom, Pitt clearly saw that, though the country could acquiesce in arrangements that might strengthen the Government by the support of Lord North's partisans, it could not tolerate the restoration to power of the man whose policy had involved it in such serious calamities. Against an union with Fox there was no such vital objection. If the personal differences between the Whig leader and Lord Shelburne could be adjusted, their political dissensions might well terminate in a peace which secured the substance of all that its common advocates professed to desire. These personal differences Lord Shelburne, on his side, was induced to forego, and to be the first to court reconciliation. It is clear that at this time, as on later occasions, far from not enduring a rival near the

* 'Life of Pitt.'

throne, Pitt was desirous of yet securing to the Government of the country the only man whose parliamentary genius and position were equal to his own. For the first and only time in his life he met Fox in private but political negotiation — happy perhaps for the career of Fox, had the object of the interview been effected! But Fox's resentment against Lord Shelburne was more implacable than Lord Shelburne's against Fox. Pitt proposed that Fox and his friends should have an equal share in the Government, Lord Shelburne retaining the Treasury; Fox made Lord Shelburne's resignation a *sine quâ non*. Pitt drew himself up — "I did not come here to betray Lord Shelburne," said he, and left the room.

Immediately following these fruitless negotiations, Lord North's familiar friend Mr. Adam, indignant at the idea that Lord North should be excluded from the Cabinet that was left open to his friends, got into communication, through George North the ex-Minister's son, with Fox's familiar friend Lord John Townshend. "These three (writes Lord John to Lord Holland in 1830) laid their heads together." "Fitzpatrick's aid was invaluable;" Sheridan was "eager and clamorous" for the junction; Burke was not adverse. Beyond this (and we rejoice to find that Burke's share in the intrigue has been so much exaggerated) Burke had no great hand in the work; "and," adds Lord John, "it was lucky, as we thought, that he had not, as he might in any day have marred everything, according to custom, in some wrong-headed fit of intemperance." Thus three men, of mark in their little day, but exceedingly obscure to posterity, made up the notorious Coalition between Fox and North, of which the ultimate conse-

quences were the annihilation of the North party, the decimation and discredit of the Whig, and the formation of that vast parliamentary majority, — founded on the ruins of the one, swelled by the seceders from the other, — which so long maintained the destinies of England in the hands of Mr. Pitt.

Against the morality of the Coalition so much has been said, that we may be saved the necessity of reiterating austere homilies on a worn-out text. But we must frankly own, that the apologists for Mr. Fox have in this instance laid too much stress on the placability of his disposition. For if he forgot his old resentment against Lord North, it was to gratify his new resentment against Lord Shelburne. It was the sacrifice of one revenge for the prosecution of another. And his real excuse is not to be sought in the forgiving sweetness of his temper, but in that fervour of passion which too often blinds judgment by the very fire that it gives to genius. From a great flame goes a great smoke.

But, accepting all that can mitigate the political sin of the Fox and North Coalition, it remains not the less grave as a political blunder on the part of Mr. Fox. It is difficult to conceive how a people could ever have been wisely governed by a statesman who could so egregiously miscalculate the directions of public opinion. Nor could a party fail to decrease rapidly in power and importance that appeared to the community to renounce all the recognised principles of political action in order to subserve the ambition of a chief whose very genius only rendered more alarming to the safety of the commonwealth the unscrupulous appliance of his means to the naked audacity of his ends.

But whatever the ultimate effect of the coalition, it

obtained Fox's immediate object — it drove Shelburne from power; and he who had declared when opposing Lord North that "peace upon any terms — peace for a year, for a month, for a day — was indispensable under the present circumstances of the country," joined with Lord North in condemning the successful negotiator of a peace, of which Lord Temple, no partial friend to Lord Shelburne, speaks "as the most meritorious and happiest event for a kingdom exhausted of men and of credit." "By my absence in Ireland and my little connection with Lord Shelburne I was enabled," adds Lord Temple, "to judge of it with coolness and impartiality, and, from the knowledge of the various difficulties attending it, I am convinced better terms could not have been had."*

It was evidently the hope of the Coalition to detach Pitt from Shelburne. North, in replying to Pitt's speech against the resolutions by which Lord John Cavendish implied his censure of the Government, pointedly said that "he saw no reason why the carrying of the present motion should drive Mr. Pitt from the service of his country." Fox up to this moment had also taken occasion to compliment Pitt at the expense of Shelburne. So exclusively personal towards the chief minister was the attack of the Coalition, that, when Lord Shelburne resigned, the King, on the plea injudiciously left to him "that Lord Shelburne was the only person in whom the House of Commons had shown a want of confidence," baulked the expectations of the victors, and startled all parties, by offering the Treasury to Pitt with full powers to nominate his colleagues.

* 'Courts and Cabinets of George III.,' vol. i. p. 302.

In the secret diplomacy of parties a man whose name henceforth became closely associated with that of Pitt had lately taken a very active part. Henry Dundas, then in his forty-third year, is thus characterised by Lord Brougham, in one of those Sketches which, whatever our several impressions in particular instances as to the perfect accuracy of the colouring, are not less valuable specimens of a great artist's skill in composition. "Henry Dundas (afterwards Lord Melville) was a plain business-like speaker; a clear, easy, fluent, and — from much practice as well as strong natural sense — a skilful debater." To this we may add, that, if the effect of his speeches was somewhat marred by a broad Scotch accent, so on the other hand it was favoured by the advantages of a comely countenance and imposing person. He understood well the *system* of business — uniting industry in details with the facility of generalisation; his temperament was buoyant, his manners were pleasing. No man more agreeable could be met in the byeways of political life. The austerest member on the opposite side could enjoy his laugh in the lobby or share his bottle at Bellamy's. To qualities so fitted to rise in life, Henry Dundas added the profound determination to do so. He grafted his talents on the healthiest fruit-trees, and trained them with due care on the sunny side of the wall. Lord Advocate under North's Administration, and one of the most zealous defenders of the American war while the war was popular, with intuitive sagacity he saw in season the necessity of adapting his opinions to the vicissitudes of time. By a sort of magnetism kindred to this happy clairvoyance he was attracted towards Mr. Pitt, on the very first appearance of the latter as

the opponent of the Government of which Dundas was the partisan and member. In reply to a speech against Ministers made by Pitt in his maiden session, Dundas said, —

"The Honourable Gentleman who spoke last claims *my particular approbation.* I find myself compelled to rejoice in the good fortune of my country and my fellow-subjects, who are destined at some future day to derive the most important services from so happy an union of first-rate abilities, high integrity, bold and honest independency of conduct, and the most precocious eloquence."

By a dexterity that was really admirable in its way, the Lord Advocate contrived to glide so easily from Lord North's Administration into Lord Rockingham's that he really heightened his character in retaining his office. With a penetrating eye that comprehended in a glance the welfare of Great Britain and the interests of Henry Dundas, this profound politician perceived the faults in Mr. Fox that rendered it more likely that the genius of that statesman would adorn an Opposition than maintain a Government. Accordingly we have seen that, while in the Rockingham Administration, and nominally under the lead of Mr. Fox, he still turned his prophetic inclinations towards Mr. Pitt, and made a marked distinction in "purity of intention" between the young man who spoke on the opposite side of the House and the leader on the Treasury Bench. From Lord Rockingham's Administration he slid into Lord Shelburne's with a yet easier grace than that with which he had glided from Lord North's into Lord Rockingham's. Anxious to preserve his office and his country, Dundas then became the zealous but

unsuccessful negotiator in the attempt to secure to Lord Shelburne the support of Lord North. Some little time before retiring from power, but when its necessity was evident, Lord Shelburne sent to Dundas, and said to him, with that courtly combination of cynicism and loftiness which often distinguished the Earl in his commerce with mankind, "Did you ever hear the story of the Duke of Perth?" "No," said Dundas. "Then I will tell it you. The Duke of Perth had a country neighbour and friend who came to him one morning with a white cockade in his hat. 'What is the meaning of this?' asked the Duke. 'I wish to show your Grace,' replied his country friend, 'that I am resolved to follow your fortunes.' The Duke snatched the hat from his head, took the cockade out of it, and threw it into the fire, saying, 'My situation and duty compel me to take this line, but that is no reason why you should ruin yourself and your family.' I find," continued Lord Shelburne, "it will now be necessary for me to quit the government, but as you are beloved by all parties I wished you to have early notice of it, that you might be prepared for what must happen!"

The Lord Advocate *was* prepared not to ruin himself and his family. And he it was who, on Lord Shelburne's final overthrow, "being," says Horace Walpole, "one of the boldest of men, proposed to the King to send for the very young Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Pitt, not yet past 23" — he it was who strained all the efforts of his eloquent experience to induce William Pitt to accept the offer, and, in order to give the more time for reflection, he it was who moved the adjournment of the House for three days. "By far the greater number of the friends whom

Pitt consulted," says Bishop Tomline, "advised him to accept the offer." Pitt never more evinced that fine judgment which Lord Bacon calls "the wisdom of business," than when he declined. Again the King, most loth to humble himself to what he called "a faction," entreated Pitt to retract his determination. But Pitt remained immovable. He understood the King's interest better than his Majesty did. The Coalition must be tried in office before it could be safe for the monarchy to hazard that most delicate and critical of all political questions which lies involved in the constitutional prerogative of the King to choose his ministers, and the attempt of ministers so chosen to govern the country, even for a time, against a majority in the House of Commons. "The King," said the dutiful heir-apparent, whose friendship Mr. Fox so dearly purchased, "has not yet agreed to the plan of the Coalition, but by G— he shall be made to agree to it."

The royal prediction was verified; the Duke of Portland became chief minister under Lord North and Mr. Fox.

In quitting office — with powers so acknowledged, and an ambition so flatteringly caressed — we might suppose, according to ordinary parliamentary precedents, that Mr. Pitt would have become the recognized leader of Opposition. He pointedly renounced all assumption to that post. Before the new ministry was formed, he declared with emphasis that "he was unconnected with any party whatever; that he should keep himself reserved, and act with whichever side he thought did right." He soon showed his independence of the main body in opposition by renewing in more detail his motion on Parliamentary Reform. It was lost by a much

larger majority than the former one, owing, it was said, "to the increased influence of Lord North, as Secretary of State" — a proof how little Fox had advanced the principles he professed by the coalition in which he had gratified his personal ambition and private resentment. Nor would Pitt join with the majority of the Opposition in the popular clamour against a tax on receipts; though on another occasion he unsparingly exposed the waste and profligacy of a loan by which, according to Lord Shelburne, the public lost 650,000*l.*, which was negotiated in private on the same principle which Lord North had adopted and the Whigs denounced; which gave a bonus of six per cent. to the lenders, and rose with a rapidity that startled the upward eyes on Exchange to a premium of eight. But the Great Houses had again placed the finances of the country in the well-bred hands of Lord John Cavendish; and it is no matter of surprise that the 3 per cent. Consols, which in March were at 70, fell to 56 in the following December, just before the country lost the services of that estimable nobleman. The public paid dear for the whistle of the "learned Canary Bird." It was in thus standing aloof from party that Pitt continued to concentre on himself the hopes of the country, with which every party had lost ground. Had Pitt avowedly become leader of an Opposition in which the former supporters of the North Administration — angry with the Coalition — made the more prominent section, his position would have lost that character of independence and liberality which rendered it so popular. He must have foreseen that, when the occasion came for concert, the various malcontents would rally round him. All wrecks come to the shore — but only in crumbling

away can the shore drift to the wrecks. Thus, still standing alone, Pitt was the better enabled to appear before the public as the adviser of practical reforms emanating from himself, and unembarrassed by complaisance to the antecedents of those who had supported abuses under previous Governments. He introduced a bill for the more economical regulation of the public offices, which the Whig Chancellor of the Exchequer opposed upon the ground, "that, if abuses did exist, the heads of the offices might reform them." Ministers did not, however, dare to divide against the bill in the Commons; but they united to throw it out in the Lords. Decidedly in the Coalition the old North principles had a full proportion of influence. But Mr. Fox, who had complained so much of Cabinet dissensions when acting with Shelburne, is silent as to any differences in acting with North; on the contrary, he speaks only of the gratitude due to Lord North's "very handsome conduct," and of the concord between himself and that distinguished High Tory upon all practical questions.

Parliament, prorogued on the 16th of July, left the Coalition unscathed, and in September Pitt went abroad for the first and only time of his life: his companions were Eliot and Wilberforce. With the more eminent of these two accomplished men Pitt had formed a friendship which at that period in the lives of both was endeared by congenial habits and kindred sympathies. They were of the same age — born within three months of each other, — both accomplished scholars, neither of them professedly a bookman. Both had high animal spirits; though, Pitt's finding their usual vent in political conflict, Wilberforce had more

ready gaiety to spend in general society. Mirth in each had a singular character of freshness and innocence — almost feminine with Wilberforce, at times quite boyish with Pitt. Speaking of one of Pitt's visits to him at Wimbledon, at the date when his friend was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Shelburne, Wilberforce says, "We found the fruits of Pitt's earlier rising in the careful sowing of the garden-beds with the fragments of a dress-hat, in which Ryder had overnight come down from the Opera." The acquaintance between these two young men had commenced at Cambridge, had become more intimate in the gallery of the House of Commons, where both often sat as observant strangers before they became actors of such mark upon the stage. They grew yet more intimate at Goosetree's Club, while Pitt yet played with "intense earnestness" at games of chance; or at the Boar's Head, Eastcheap, in memory of Shakspeare, where Pitt was "the most amusing of the party." Wilberforce entered the House as member for Hull, at the general election, a few months before Pitt. Lord Rockingham had declined the overtures of the one; he strained all his interest in Yorkshire against the other. The decided action and popular sentiments of Pitt often separated them on divisions; and it was not till the Shelburne government that they became politically united. During that administration, Pitt, "to whom it was a luxury even to sleep in country air," frequently visited Wilberforce at his villa; and thither did he joyously repair when he resigned his residence in Downing Street to the Coalition Ministry. "Eliot, Arden, and I," wrote Pitt one afternoon, "will be with you before curfew, and *expect* an early meal of peas and strawberries."

Wilberforce had already distinguished himself as a speaker in parliament. He had seconded Pitt on the address to the Throne under the Shelburne Government; he had denounced the Coalition with a vehemence equal to his friend's. Of all Pitt's associates there was not one who at that time appeared more likely, from congenial character, sentiments, and intellect, to share in the honours of his political career. But Providence destined them to promote noble ends, in directions that diverged by the way: the one advancing human interests in the more exclusive service of his country; the other adorning his country, and elevating its moral standard, by a more special devotion to the cause of catholic humanity.

The three travellers crossed over to Calais, and proceeded straight to Rheims, "to gain some knowledge of the language before they went to Paris." The intendant of the police regarded them as very suspicious characters. Their courier represented them as "grands seigneurs;" "and yet," said the shrewd functionary, "they are in a wretched lodging, and have no attendance. They must be *des intrigants*." Fortunately these unfavourable impressions were communicated to a French abbé, "a fellow of infinite humour," who was secretary to the Conseil d'Etat, under the Archbishop of Périgord. "Satisfied," as the abbé said, "with their appearance," he offered them every civility which the politeness of his nation could suggest; made them acquainted with the noblesse in the neighbourhood; and introduced them to a familiar footing at the episcopal palace. Pitt here evinced that remarkable quickness of perception which gave to his youth the advantages usually confined to experience. "Though

no master of the French vocabulary, he caught readily the intonations of the language, and soon spoke it with considerable accuracy."

Two of his reputed sayings at this time are worth citing. "I am greatly surprised," said the abbé, "that a country so moral as England can submit to be governed by a man so wanting in private character as Fox. It seems to show you to be less moral than you appear." "*C'est que vous n'avez pas été sous la baguette du magicien*," was Pitt's happy reply; "but the remark," he continued, "is just." Another time the abbé asked him, in what part the British Constitution might be first expected to decay. Pitt, musing for a moment, answered, "The part of our Constitution which will first perish is the prerogative of the King and the authority of the House of Peers." The answer is profound; and though the circumstances of that time might favour the conjecture more than those of the present, yet, no doubt, in the ordinary progress of civilization, the vitality of the moving body endures longer than the checks on its action. Rarely does the bridle last as long as the horse! But this reply, made at the time when Pitt was a parliamentary reformer, and desired, by the mode of his reform, to give more preponderance to the conservative scale in the balance of representative government, may serve to explain the motives of his policy in later life, when he deemed it necessary to carry all his genius to the preservation of the weaker powers in the State. For though Crown and Peers may go first, if ever the harmonious elements of the English constitution are condemned to dissolution, popular freedom may go very soon afterwards. In states highly civilized the fears of property

soon determine any contest between political liberty and civil order in favour of the last. Remove a king, and the odds are that you create a dictator; destroy an aristocracy, and between throne and mob — between wealth and penury — between thief and till — what do order and property invoke to their aid? The answer is brief — an army! In every European community soldiers appear in proportion as aristocracy recedes. And just it is, in refutation of the charge of inconsistency brought against Pitt at a subsequent period, to state that it was at this date, when he most favoured Parliamentary reform, that Franklin, conversing with him on forms of government, was equally surprised by his talents and his anti-republican opinions.*

The three friends proceeded to Paris, and thence to the Court at Fontainebleau. At this time Horace Walpole is said to have tried "to get up a match" between William Pitt and Necker's daughter, afterwards so famous as Madame de Staël. It is even asserted that the Genevese offered to endow the young lady with a fortune of 14,000*l.* a-year. Happily, perhaps, for his domestic peace, Pitt was not tempted. He replied, probably in jest, that he was already married to his country.** The subsequent entries in Wilberforce's diary are curious: —

* Lord Holland's 'Memoirs of the Whig Party,' vol. II. p. 262.

** Lord Brougham (Sketch of Pitt) says that the story of his refusing to marry Mademoiselle de Necker rests on a true foundation, but, unless the answer was in jest, which is very possible, it was too theatrical for so great a man. We agree with Lord Brougham.

"Introduced to King, Queen, Monsieur, Madame, Comte and Comtesse d'Artois, and two aunts. Pitt stag-hunting! Eliot and I in chace to see the King — clumsy, strange figure, in immense boots! Dined. Marquis de la Fayette — pleasing enthusiastical man. They all, men and women" (writes Wilberforce to Henry Bankes), "crowded round Pitt in shoals, and he behaved with great spirit, though he was sometimes a little bored when they talked to him about the parliamentary reform."

In the midst of these courtly gaieties Pitt was recalled to London, by a special messenger, despatched by whom or for what object does not appear. Assuming the latter to be political, it seems evident that Pitt on his return to England did not see the probability of his own speedy accession to power; for at this period he seriously determined to resume the profession of the law, as the only plan he could adopt to preserve "that independence which he had resolved never to forfeit."* Indeed, the Coalition Administration had gained strength merely by living on. Though the discontent of the King remained unsoftened, it assumed the character of despondency. He said in private that, "though he disliked ministers, he would give them fair play." In a confidential letter to Lord Northington, Fox writes that —

"The King has no inclination to do anything to serve us or to hurt us; and I believe that he has no view to any other administration which he means to substitute in lieu of us..... Our lasting out the summer will prove that his dislike is not such as to proceed to overt acts. Parliament is certainly our

* Tomline's 'Life of Pitt,' chap. III.

strong place; and if we can last during the recess, I think people will have little doubt of our lasting during the session. When I look over our strength in the House of Commons, and see that all hopes of dissension are given up even by the enemy, while on the other hand Shelburne, Temple, Thurlow, and Pitt, are some of them quite unmanageable, and have, to my certain knowledge, hardly any communication with each other, I cannot help thinking the fear of our being overturned in parliament is quite chimerical."

The Ministry indeed were strong by union within the Cabinet, by a large majority in the Commons, by the motley and divided nature of the Opposition, and above all by the apparent impossibility to form any other Government. The Whigs thought the Coalition had ceased to be unpopular; that supposition, as events proved, was incorrect.

And during this short interval of power Fox himself appears to brilliant advantage. With the firmness which Rockingham had wanted, he insisted on excluding Thurlow from his Cabinet. He turned out the Lord Advocate Dundas, who would have stayed in if he could, though he had before emphatically declared his resolve "to adhere to the fortunes of Mr. Pitt." Fox wavered, it is true (from one of his most fatal faults — facility to the advice of friends whose intellect was far inferior to his own), in the course of the summer, as to the restoration of the grim Lord Chancellor. But some negotiations to that effect failed. His policy with regard to Ireland was on the whole sound and vigorous. He showed temper and judgment in smoothing over a difficulty as to the allowance to be made to the Prince of Wales, which at one time gravely threatened to place the people on the side of the King; and the

unanimity that prevailed in a Cabinet so composed must have been owing not more to Lord North's exquisite good humour and epicurean philosophy, than to Fox's frank and cordial temper, and masculine knowledge of the world — of gentlemen. Only in one quarter danger to the Government could be discerned. Ministers were strong for the transaction of ordinary business; they must necessarily be weak the instant they began to legislate on a grander scale, and admit the principles of reconstruction. Parliamentary reform, with Lord North voting one way sincerely, and Mr. Fox another way with little faith in the wisdom of his vote, was out of the question. The safety of the Whigs really lay in the abeyance of Whiggery. But there was one question on which it was impossible not to stir. Reform in England might be shelved — reform in India could brook no longer delay. Not to be evaded was the dire necessity "of doing something" to rectify or terminate a system of misgovernment which, Lord John Russell justly says, "had alarmed and disquieted English statesmen of all parties." If the Ministry had dallied with this subject, it would have been taken out of their hands by the Opposition. Dundas indeed, whose knowledge of Indian affairs was superior to that of any public man (unless Burke alone be excepted), had already, in the previous April, taken the initiative on the question by the introduction of a "Bill for the better regulation and government of the British possessions in India;" and Mr. Fox had on that occasion declared his intention of taking up the whole question early the next session. Fox had sufficient sagacity to suspect that the measures devised by himself and his Cabinet for the remedy of evils

universally acknowledged were of a hazardous nature; but that sagacity did not go far enough to foresee the amount of the hazard, the nature of the objections his bill would provoke, nor the means of preserving its efficiency but removing its more obnoxious provisions. He seems to have supposed that the Opposition would only be formidable, inasmuch as they would be joined "on the grounds of personal attachment to this or that director, or to this or that governor." Never more did he show his want of what the present Emperor of France has called "the electric sympathy between the successful statesman and public opinion," than in his imperfect perception of the real danger to which his measure would expose the Ministry. On the whole he was sanguine of success: "the question," he hoped, "would be over by Christmas, and Government safe for the session." Thus apparently strong, Ministers met Parliament on the 11th of November, 1783. They announced in the King's speech the conclusion of definitive treaties of peace. The situation of the East India Company, and the necessity of providing for the security and improvement of the revenue, were the reasons assigned for calling Parliament together at so early a period. Pitt spoke on the address with the moderation of a man who saw no opening for assault. He said, it is true, and with justice, "that the principle of the peace proposed was the same as that which the members of the Government, when in opposition, had rejected," and that the vote was the panegyric of the late Ministers upon the very point on which they were then censured; but he agreed that the affairs of India and the state of the revenue demanded the immediate attention of Ministers, in terms so far from hostile, that

Fox "thanked him for his support." All thus went on smoothly till, on the 18th, Fox, with a dazzling and fatal eloquence, introduced his "India Bill" and condemned his Government. All which must render the measure adverse alike to Crown and people — all which the elaborate survey of its framers had overlooked — Pitt saw with his usual rapidity of glance, and denounced with a vehemence the result could not fail to justify. The enemy with their own hands had led the fatal horse into Ilion, and Fox but decked with pompous trappings the engine that contained his destruction.

> "Venit summa dies, et ineluctabile tempus
> Dardaniæ: fuimus Troës, fuit Ilium, et ingens
> Gloria Teucrorum: ferus omnia Jupiter Argos
> Transtulit!"

The noble editor of the Correspondence we have so largely quoted somewhat startles us by the panegyric he devotes to the measure he exhumes from its grave. We are willing to respect the pious reverence with which he handles its cold remains. We will grant they are not the bones of a monster, but we cannot enshrine them as the relics of a saint. Let us allow, if he pleases, that this ill-starred India Bill contained much that was excellent, and that the mischievous part of it was exaggerated by its opponents. But after all that can be said in its defence, it does not the less exhibit a lamentable failure in practical statesmanship. When a reform is necessary, two considerations should be paramount with a Government seriously anxious to carry it: firstly, the plan proposed should be one which the people will support; and secondly, one that its op-

ponents cannot with effect ascribe to corrupt and sinister motives. Mr. Fox's plan (and to him, not to Burke, Lord John insists on ascribing the honour of its conception) combined every element of unpopularity, and gave every excuse to the charge that it was sought less to govern India well than to secure, by the patronage of India, the duration of the Whig Ministry. "The transfer of a power, the vastness and the abuse of which had been duly impressed on the public mind, to seven commissioners named by the Whig Government, with the disposal of the military commands and commissions in the armies of the Indian empire; the annual nomination of cadets and writers to the different settlements; the purchase of merchandise and stores to the amount of five or six millions a year; the taking up ships and contracts for freights — these, and various other sources of patronage connected with such enormous establishments, such extensive trade, so large a dominion, and so ample a revenue, must have constituted a degree of influence which, when opposed to Ministers, might have impeded the necessary functions of executive government, and when friendly might have enabled them to carry any measures, however injurious to the interests of the people or the prerogative of the Crown."* Thus argued the opponents to the Bill; and poor indeed seems Lord John Russell's answer, that the dictatorship of the commission would only last for four years. For if the patronage thus given to the Coalition could secure a continuance of four years to that government, the same cause would prolong power to the same dispensers of the patronage. And in the very speech

* Tomline's 'Life of Pitt.'

in which Fox moved for leave to bring in the Bill, he said that "the influence of the Crown in its most enormous and alarming state was nothing compared to the boundless patronage of the East Indian government, if the latter was to be used in the influence of that House." But all this patronage was to be placed in the hands of commissioners chosen by Mr. Fox.

As the Bill proceeded, new alarms were created. Its defenders, especially the Attorney-General, used arguments that threatened the charters of every Company in England. Thus vested rights, popular opinions, royal prerogative, were all combined in one opposition, not to reform in India, but to proposals that seemed to transfer to a government at home, whose very existence was an outrage on all creeds of political integrity hitherto received, the corruption of Indian patronage and the audacity of Indian rapine. But though the clouds might be seen collecting from each point in the sky, their distance from each other made the storm slow in forming. Fox saw that his danger lay in discussion, his safety in despatch. He availed himself of his majority to hurry his measure through its successive stages in the Commons, in spite of all that William Grenville and Pitt could do to arrest its progress. On the 9th of December it was carried up to the House of Lords, by Mr. Fox and "a great body of the House of Commons." Meanwhile the King had risen from his inert despondency — the Lord had delivered his ministers into his hands. He had not hitherto openly proclaimed his hostility to his Government; his Government now declared war upon him, and placed him in the position most favourable to monarchical power, and that in which it has ever most excuse for

time he accepted; but it was not without a full perception of the difficulties that beset him.

"When I went," says Bishop Tomline, "into Mr. Pitt's bed-room the next morning, he told me he had had not a moment's sleep; he expressed great uneasiness at the state of public affairs, at the same time declaring his fixed resolution not to abandon the situation he had undertaken, but to make the best stand in his power, though very doubtful of the result."

Many public men, indeed, who had approved his opposition to the late ministry, declined the responsibility of assisting in the formation of a new one. No one believed his government could last a month. In the ministry he formed he was compelled entirely to rely upon the Peers; not one commoner of sufficient mark for the Cabinet could he find. And yet so strongly was it felt that the struggle waged by the minister was against the Great Houses, that a peer of high rank said shortly afterwards, "Mr. Pitt single-handed has beat the aristocracy." It was not the aristocracy he beat, but rather by the help of the aristocracy he beat the oligarchy which had ruled in its name.

A name greater than Temple's was absent from the new Government. But its greatness necessitated its exclusion, except at the head of the list. The Earl of Shelburne, according to Lord Holland, "felt great resentment against Mr. Pitt for leaving him out in the formation of his ministry." Lord Holland (never in the Earl's confidence) errs in this conclusion. Pitt would have justified every charge of presumption brought against him had he invited to a post inferior

tc his own the brilliant and haughty chief under whom he had served but the year before.*

On better authority than Lord Holland's** we presume to contradict a prevalent idea that Shelburne bore a grudge against Pitt for not urging a request that a man of the Earl's temper would have treated as an affront. But not less is it certain, that, if Shelburne felt no resentment against Mr. Pitt, deep was his resentment against George III. The anger was mutual. The King never pardoned Lord Shelburne's resignation — Shelburne never pardoned the King for misapprehending his situation then, and not appealing to his

* Indeed, from motives of obvious delicacy, so carefully did Pitt refrain from soliciting to the aid of an experiment, the hazard of which was ascribed to his personal arrogance and vanity, men of station more established than his own, that not even the decided part which Lord Gower had taken against the India Bill induced him to press that nobleman to give to the Cabinet the advantage of his name; and it was Lord Gower who sent to inform the young minister that "in the distressed situation of the sovereign and the country he would take any office in which he could be useful." Lord Gower gave a noble example in the patriotism which distinguished him on this occasion. Twice previously refusing the Treasury, and sincerely preferring the repose of private life — he not only risked the prestige of his position in accepting office under a Government that seemed doomed at its birth, but afterwards gave up the office most suited to his personal dignity, the Presidentship of the Council, and condescended to accept the Privy Seal, in order to secure to the Cabinet the illustrious Camden, who, having been Lord Chancellor, could not well take any office but that of Lord President.

** Viz. Lord Lansdowne's (Lord Shelburne's son).

counsels afterwards; and from circumstances insufficiently known to us, the Earl always considered that the King had not only wronged but deceived him. Henceforth this remarkable man appears no more as a candidate for power. He accepted, not without reluctance, the Marquisate of Lansdowne, as Temple, equally haughty, accepted the Marquisate of Buckingham; but he was peculiarly careful that the world should not suppose that his political independence was compromised by the honours that attested his former services. The year after the assumption of his new title he suddenly reappeared in the Lords, and, with that eccentricity of self-willed genius which had obtained for him the epithet of insincere, he relieved the vote that he gave to the Government from all suspicion of servile complaisance by a speech barbed with an irony that delighted the Opposition. But such demonstrations of his earlier spirit were, for some years, too rare to prove to the public that Lord Shelburne still lived in the Marquis of Lansdowne. On the Regency question, indeed, he displayed in a speech which, in masculine diction and vigorous thought, is perhaps the most striking specimen of his eloquence preserved to the study of English orators, his rooted disdain of Whig tactics and idols, and the philosophy of the Tribune which he had grafted on his experience of Courts.

"The people," exclaimed the great Marquis in the course of this nervous oration — "the people, my lords, have rights and privileges; kings and princes have none." The French Revolution, with the war which was its collateral consequence, furnished the Lord of Bowood with ample occasion to deduce from that startling axiom many notable problems in the Mathesis

of Democracy. Retaining to the last his profound contempt for Fox, the shafts that he launched against Pitt were forged on the same anvil as those which had thinned the ranks of the oligarchy he had aided Pitt to destroy. The high-spirited soldier who had so reluctantly acceded to the claims of American patriots, so scrupulously enforced the formality of a clause to save the honour of the Imperial Crown, now insisted on suing for peace to a nation which had decreed that a proposal for peace was a capital crime in its citizens, and declared by the mouth of its minister, "If kings treat with us, let them treat with our armies on the frontiers."*

Yet it is not thus that we would part with this eminent man. We love rather to regard him sauntering on the lawns of Bowood, listening with the sceptical smile of his profound and embittered experience to the young visions of Bentham; or in the salons of Paris, startling Mirabeau with his easy force, and comparing with the ill-starred Malesherbes the stores of a reading almost equally diffuse, and the results of a far more extensive commerce with mankind. Nor is there less interest in the contemplation of this once fiery soldier, this passionate yet scheming statesman, musing alone amidst the vast collection of political documents which his industry amassed, as if in those records of abortive stratagem and foiled ambition he found a melancholy consolation for the close of his own career. We must apologise for the length of this episodical digression — not indeed disproportioned to the dignity of the man to whom, more than any other, Lord ... to

* See Lord Grenville's reply to Lord Lansdowne's motion for peace with France. Parl. Debates, Feb. 17, 1794.

is to be ascribed that great revolution in our national councils which freed the monarchy from the dominion of the Great Houses, to whom Pitt owed his introduction into the national councils, and from whom, of all contemporaneous statesmen, that Minister acknowledged that he had learned the most. Upon large classes of our countrymen the influence of Lord Shelburne's peculiar intellect and modes of thinking still rests. It may be seen in the principles of commerce now generally received, and to which he was the first practical statesman who lent his authority; it may be seen in that powerful division in the popular camp which disdains alike the rant of the hustings and the affectation with which the Whigs invoke history and the constitution to the aid of party manœuvres — the philosophers of the English Agora, with whom the principles of Mr. Fox are less authority than the maxims of Mr. Mill. While, apart from his later doctrines, and viewing him rather as he stood midway between Rockingham and North, his tenets often live again in that large and growing school of politicians who have no fear of the people in defending their institutions, and who will not allow that genuine Conservatism should concede to any faction arrogating popular claims a monopoly of the privilege to reform abuses, and to keep from that discord which is the sure prelude to social disorder the reciprocal harmonies of opinion and law.

On forming the Coalition Government, Fox had said "success only could justify it." Success only could justify the course the King took to overthrow it. But no sooner was that Government dismissed than the people, before comparatively supine from a belief in its necessity, hastened to manifest the detestation they

had suppressed. Addresses of congratulation to the King poured in from all quarters. The constituencies were evidently not with the majority in the Commons. There, the motion for a new writ for the borough of Appleby was received with loud and derisive laughter.

The War of the Giants now commenced. Never in Parliament was a contest to decide the fate of parties for long years to come fought with such fiery valour on the one side, with such consummate judgment on the other. By a fatal error of policy Fox contrived to fix the contest upon ground untenable in itself and unpopular by the arguments used to defend it, viz. that Parliament should not be dissolved. The insistence on this point could only be construed into an acknowledgment of weakness, a fear of the very tribunal whose decision, according to all his previous theories, it became him to be the first to solicit. In Pitt's absence from Parliament during his re-election, the Opposition carried an address to the Crown praying his Majesty not to dissolve. His Majesty drily replied, that he should not interrupt their meeting by that exercise of his prerogative.

Pitt, indeed, was urged by many of his friends to advise a dissolution; but he foresaw that such a step would be premature. What were called the great parliamentary interests — the close boroughs — were against him. His chance of success lay with the popular and independent constituencies. To command these, prolonged discussion was essential. He could not leave unanswered in the mouths of his opponents on the hustings the cry that he came in "by secret influences;" or that, in opposing the India Bill, he would maintain *Indian misgovernment*. He resolved to confront the

tempestuous majority against him, and let the people compare himself with his assailants before he asked for their verdict. The House adjourned from the 26th of December to the 12th of January. During the recess Pitt was fortunately enabled to give a signal proof of that superiority to self-interest which the English people are ever disposed to associate with a paramount zeal for the public service. The Clerkship of the Pells, in his own gift, became vacant; its emoluments were above 3000*l.* a year. Lord Thurlow and many others pressed him to take that office to himself. He was poor, his present station exceedingly precarious. Pecuniary independence was confessedly dear to the man who, in order to secure it, had even thought of resigning the position he had so rapidly won in Parliament for the tedious profession of the bar. Pitt not only declined himself to take the office, but, in the appointment he made, he covered a blot in the Rockingham Administration. Colonel Barré had been rewarded by that Government with a pension of 3000*l.* a year. No member of Parliament more deserved some distinction from a Government espousing popular opinions, but the public did not like to see that distinction in the jobbing form of a pension. Pitt gave the Clerkship of the Pells to Colonel Barré on condition that the pension was resigned. "It is the act of a man," said that stern colonel, whose first growl in Parliament had daunted Chatham, though Chatham had lived to tame him, "who feels that he stands upon a high eminence in the eyes of that country which he is destined to govern."

Pitt hastened to meet the attacks made on him in his absence. But one flaw could be found in his title — he was said to have come in through intrigue;

through secret influence: that accusation Lord John Russell has repeated. "Mr. Pitt," he says, "committed a great fault in accepting office as the price of an unworthy intrigue." This allegation is wholly inaccurate. Grant that the commnnications between the King and Lord Temple, and the circulation of the King's views as to the India Bill among the Peers, could be fairly called an unworthy intrigue — there is not the slightest evidence that Pitt advised or shared in them: the utmost even that Lord Holland can say on that head is, that they were "*probably* known to Pitt." The probability is all the other way. Pitt, we are told by one who was thoroughly in his confidence at that particular period (his former tutor, Bishop Tomline), though seriously embarrassed at the loss of Lord Temple's assistance in forming his Government, was "convinced of the propriety of Temple's resignation, under the present impression of the public mind." Temple himself stood aloof from that Government, gave it no advice, and evidently — by a letter to Pitt, dated a week after his own resignation of the seals, beginning "Dear Sir" — was exceedingly chilled towards his near relation.* Had Pitt in any way authorised the clandestine transactions between Temple and the King, he could not have been convinced of the propriety of Lord Temple's abstinence from the Government; and for the same reason he would have felt himself disqualified for office. His participation in such intrigue must have been known to its promoters, and he could not have stood up in parliament and pronounced these solemn

* 'Courts and Cabinets of George III.,' vol. i. p. 291.

and stately words on the first day he met that parliament as minister of the Crown: —

"I came up no backstairs; when sent for by my sovereign to know whether I would accept office, I necessarily went to the Royal Closet. Little did I think to be ever charged in this House with being the tool and abettor of secret influence. I will never condescend to be the instrument of any secret advisers whatever; nor in one instance, while I have the honour to act as minister of the Crown, will I be responsible for measures not my own, or at least in which my heart and judgment do not entirely acquiesce. I have taken upon me the government of the country upon one single, plain, intelligible principle, by which I desire to stand or fall, viz., to save the country from the India Bill, which threatened destruction to its liberties. My conduct is uniform and intelligible, and the nation and the world will understand and applaud it."

The nation did understand it then, and understands it now. By one of those quick decisions in the public judgment which make distinctions the most marked on questions the most delicate, the people discriminated between Lord Temple and Pitt. They would not have accepted the first as minister. In accrediting the last they acquitted him. Pitt was not the questionable cause that destroyed the Coalition, but his Government was the necessary consequence of that destruction. And he would have deserted the principles he professed, condemned the country to a bill that he regarded fatal to its liberties, and delivered people and King bound hand and foot to the Coalition Ministry, if he had said, "I cannot aid in defending the right, because somebody else has given me the power to do so by having done some-

thing wrong." And truly observes his biographer, "that such was the confidence felt in Mr. Pitt, even at this early period of his life, that his character was not in the slightest degree affected by the clamour which compelled Lord Temple to resign." Two days after, the young minister brought forward his own India Bill, and gave the country an occasion to contrast his constructive genius with that of Mr. Fox. The Bill was rejected by the House after a second reading on the motion for committal. But in that hostile assembly the majority against it was only eight; and the sense of the country was soon pronounced in its favour. Still Fox continued to fight against a dissolution, and upon arguments equally hostile to constitutional monarchy and representative government. He had the incredible audacity to assert that the Crown did not possess the power of dissolving parliament in the middle of a session, "an attempt," says Lord John truly, "that had neither law nor precedent in its favour."

To give the supreme power of the nation, not to the people who elected the House of Commons, but to a House of Commons actually sitting — and without appeal to the people, whatever the measures it might adopt — would obviously be to constitute a standing army against both the Crown and the Constituencies. And never was there an instance in which a demand of this nature could be more unhappily made; for the majority against the King's Government, were composed, as Lord John remarks, "in part of the men who had led the country to loss and disgrace during the American war, and in part of the men who had promised to bring them to punish-

ment for that misconduct. It would be said," adds Lord John (and it *was* said), "that the object for which these two hostile parties had combined was to erect a power, neither elected by the people nor removable by the Crown, in whose store all the treasures of India were to be thrown for the purpose of maintaining the sway of an oligarchy unknown to the Constitution and hateful to the nation. Such were the perils rashly incurred by Mr. Fox; such were the perils by which he was overwhelmed." But granting that, both as a party leader and a constitutional statesman, Mr. Fox thus proved his grievous defects, cheerfully do we add with Lord John, "that it is impossible not to admire the wonderful resource, the untiring energy, the various eloquence, the manly courage, with which he conducted this extraordinary campaign." In fact, he appears to us never more signally to have shown how possible it is in the English parliament to unite the grandest powers of debate with the most egregious mistakes in Council. But the Constitution meanwhile was shaking beneath this contest of its elementary powers; the country gentlemen on both sides feared for the land in which their stake was so large. Amongst them party was suspended — patriotism prevailed; supporters of Government and friends of the Opposition united in the open endeavour to reconcile Pitt and Fox, King and Commons. Against such a combination all Pitt's more ambitious interests must have been arrayed, yet apparently he did not suffer such considerations to weigh with him unduly. He felt the tremendous difficulties of his position. He stood the sole Cabinet Minister in the House of Commons (charged, therefore,

with the defence and conduct of all the departments in the state), against a combination unparalleled for the splendour of the powers which it brought to bear upon debate. On many prospective questions Pitt, still professedly a Reformer, might concur with Fox, provided Fox were his colleague; against Fox it might be impossible to carry even measures that Fox in his conscience might approve; he assented therefore to the well-meant entreaties of the mediators to give to the Crown a strong Government, so far as to state that he was ready to meet the Duke of Portland to consider the formation of a new Ministry on equal terms. Again the pride of the oligarchy destroyed the best hopes of the party they led. Mr. Pitt must descend from his office! the Duke of Portland must receive a direct message from the King. "For what purpose," then, said Pitt with justice, —

"should the present Ministry give way? The answer is obvious: to make room for the introduction of a set of persons who were lately dismissed for conduct which lost them the confidence of their sovereign as well as that of the people. In adverting to a wish very generally and very warmly expressed, of forming an union which might give stability to Government and reconcile all parties — to such a measure I am by no means an enemy, provided it could be established on such a broad and liberal basis as would meet the wishes of that respectable and independent body of men by whose support and countenance I have been invariably honoured. But in accomplishing this object all personal prejudices and private views must be laid aside, and a stable Government and a solid union be alone sought for."

"But," said he on another occasion, —

"*the only* fortress I desire to defend is the fortress of the

Constitution; for that I will resist every attack, every attempt to seduce me out of it. With regard to personal honour or public principle, can it be expected that I should consent to march out with a halter round my neck, and meanly beg to be readmitted and considered as a volunteer in the army of the enemy?"

The Opposition proceeded, *pari passu*, with hostile divisions and abortive negotiations. At each attack it grew fiercer in language, weaker in result; majorities dwindled rapidly down as the constituencies began to operate more and more upon their Members, until at length, on moving another address to the Crown to remove Ministers, that mighty phalanx, which three weeks ago seemed to Fox sufficient to crush every Government but his own, gained its point by a majority of one. From that moment the battle was virtually over; Fox did not dare to divide again, the Mutiny Bill was passed, the supplies voted to the extent demanded, and sixteen days afterwards the King prorogued Parliament, declaring it to be a duty he owed to the Constitution and the country to recur as speedily as possible to the sense of his people. The result was the triumphant acquittal of the King, the paramount power of his Minister. The counties and commercial towns rose everywhere against the Great Houses. For the first time during his reign the King was popular; and that popularity he never afterwards lost. In concert with Lord Temple he had endangered his crown; in concert with Pitt he confirmed it on his head. The strongholds of Democracy revolted from the Whigs. Mr. Coke was ejected from Norfolk, Erskine from Portsmouth, General Conway from Bury; even Lord John Cavendish, though universally pitied,

was ignominiously defeated; and, to crown all, against the heir of Sir George Saville — that highest prototype of the Whig country gentleman, — against the Great Houses of Fitzwilliam and Howard, — Wilberforce carried the county of York. Not less than 160 Members who had supported the Coalition lost their seats, and were honoured by the witty appellation of "Fox's Martyrs." Thus by a rapid succession of errors in judgment Fox destroyed the ascendency of that famous party which he found so powerful and made so feeble; and thus, in three years after his entrance into Parliament, Pitt, seeking only in public opinion the elements of party, confirmed in the appointment of the Crown by the support of the people, commenced his long career as Minister of England.

On looking back to the causes of a rise so unparalleled, the eye rests first on the man whose genius resisted and whose errors conduced to it. Every blunder in Fox was a stepping-stone to Pitt. But great is the general who knows how to profit by the mistakes of his adversary. That in the rapidity with which his reputation spread, and in the contented acquiescence of the rank and file to his sudden promotion over the heads of veterans, Pitt was greatly indebted to the accident of his birth, must be frankly conceded. To be the son of a great man is to be born in the purple. But his birth only recommends him to election; it does not qualify him for inheritance. He is measured by his father's standard before he is full-grown, and must be acknowledged as a giant in order to be received as a prince. His station has a kind of poetry, and his merits are submitted to the test imposed upon poets, which mediocrity cannot pass. Nay, more rare than

even the fame of a great poet is the fame of a g man's son. In achieving his father's position, circ stance favoured Pitt more than it had aided Chatham. No Newcastle interfered between himself and the Treasury. He had no enemy in his king; he had as yet no infirmities of body to sour his temper and irritate his passions. But it must also be owned that, when circumstance was in his favour, he seized it with more facility; or, when adverse, turned it aside with calmer judgment, or mastered it with more consistent firmness, than characterised the fitful energy of his father's less regulated genius. It had been the boast of Chatham to rule in defiance of all parties, though his school in reality was a bold eclecticism of conflicting doctrines. And among the prominent causes of his son's ascendency in public opinion was, as we have before indicated, the care with which he maintained his position detached from the errors of every faction, familiarising, the people to the autocracy of a single intellect. The character of his intellect contributed even more than its degree to the rapid and facile acquisition of power. It had something of the serenity which gave to Pericles the title of Olympian.

> "Tranquillum vultus et majestate serenâ
> Mulcentem radios."

And though his spirit was high and his rebuke could be crushing, yet it is remarkable that he never spoke of any man so as to make a conjunction with that man personally discreditable to either, if sanctioned by political principle.

Another characteristic of Pitt, growing out of the

self-reliance which at the commencement of his career kept him aloof from party, was the firmness with which he adhered to his own judgment against the advice, however friendly and plausible, of inferior men. He could not be persuaded to accept the office of Prime Minister before the Coalition was tried, nor to dissolve parliament prematurely when the Coalition was overthrown — in this respect strongly contrasting Fox, for whose mistakes we are constantly told by his eulogists that the advice of friends was chiefly to blame. Nor amidst the leading attributes of Pitt's mind should we omit the quality of patience. He could always master his passions and wait his time. Neither pique, nor spleen, nor interest, nor ambition, could disturb this enduring fortitude of temper. Slighted by Lord Rockingham, he did not vent any resentment on the Rockingham Whigs. Spite was a thing unknown to him. Courted by the Opposition against the Rockingham Government, he remained neutral; and, though denouncing the Coalition Ministry and withholding from it all confidence, he refrained from every appearance of factious opposition against the persons who governed, reserving to himself solely the right to scrutinise their measures, and even supporting them (as on the Receipt Tax) where to oppose would have purchased popularity at the price of his convictions. Thus, by a natural seizure of the rapid succession of events afforded to him, he established character as well as fame; and, his public integrity and high moral bearing in parliament once acknowledged, no doubt his private virtues and even his less social attributes assisted to consolidate his political repute. It did much to counteract the attempts to adduce in his youth a disqualification for his

eminence, that the usual follies of youth could not be urged against him; while his purity from every excess and his disdain of fashionable pleasure, brought into greater light the private foibles and errors of Mr. Fox. If the two men were to be compared in point of age, Fox seemed the wild boy, Pitt the matured man. Yet we think too much stress has been laid on the private errors of Mr. Fox in their influence on his political fortunes; for those errors were most conspicuous at the time when his authority was most acknowledged in parliament, and his public character most in favour out of doors. They were not successfully charged against him till his political indiscretions made even many of his former apologists refer the reckless ambition of the statesman to the habits of a gambler and the despair of a bankrupt. Even had his manners been as rigid as Pitt's, those public indiscretions would have equally affected his hold on the general confidence and esteem. Nor should it be forgotten that if, as leader of a party, his personal faults were political defects, so in the same capacity his personal virtues were not less conspicuous as political merits. Benignity and sweetness in social intercourse, cordial frankness, undaunted courage, the attractive warmth of a heart too genial for malice and too large for envy, were qualities that might well, in the eyes of his followers, redeem the riotous overflow of a rich vitality, and were inestimable advantages in the consolidation of party and the government of men. But Pitt's gain in his exemption from the follies of youth was not more to the benefit of his moral repute than to the concentration of his intellectual faculties. "A great passion," says Lavater, "bears no partner." Pitt's great passion,

no doubt, was the love of power, but it was made pure by its very intensity — a love that chastened itself by exalting the character of its object. To govern England, but to govern nobly, was the one end to which he devoted all the vigour of surpassing faculties, with that singleness .of purpose which gives even to mediocrity successes that fail to genius, when genius renounces its own superiority of force by relaxing its discipline and scattering its troops.

In estimating Pitt's eloquence, what most should be admired is its adaptation to his object; it was pre-eminent over that of all his contemporaries in the attribute of dignity; it was inferior to Fox's in playfulness, variety, in literary ornament and grace, in compact and nervous reasoning, and, above all, in vehemence and passion; it is immeasurably more suited to the man who speaks as the ruler of a nation and the councillor of a King; "he speaks," said Lord North, "like a born Minister:" and perhaps Pitt gained as much towards the acquisition of the objects to which his eloquence was devoted by his abstinence from certain varieties of beauty as by his abounding magnificence in others.

We incline to believe that it was not from penury but from prudence that he so sparingly embroidered the senatorial majesty that pervades his style. A scholar so accomplished, with a memory so prodigious and a readiness so quick, could certainly have given to his orations the classical ornaments in which Lord Holland proclaims them deficient; and so great a master of sarcasm, possessed of a vivacity in his familiar circles which made no mean judge of the attribute term *him* "*the* wittiest man of his age," could surely have

seasoned his discourse with jest and whim, if he had not thought that the spangles would ill accord with the purple hem of his toga. Perhaps for the same reason there is in his speeches so little of metaphysical subtlety or abstruse speculation. To be plain with dignity — to be practical, yet broad — is the eloquence most adapted to gain its ends with the audience addressed by Pitt. There are some beauties in literature which are the worst defects in oratory; and there is not a trace in Demosthenes of what in our closets we most admire in Burke. What has been said upon this score by a very liberal and very accomplished critic — no inconsiderable debater himself in the House of Commons — is equally wise and true.*

"The eloquence of Mr. Pitt had not the fault which is sometimes imputed to it of a deficiency in large and philosophical speculation. In this sort of excursion, though it dealt sparingly, it could with no propriety be called deficient, for it dealt enough.

"The objectors appear to forget that oratorical, like poetic composition, is in its nature not philosophical but popular. The object of both is to affect strongly; and no critical precept can be more universally familiar, nor more deeply founded in human nature, than this, — that the mind is strongly affected only by near and individual representations. The abstract theorems and generic conclusions of the metaphysician are destructive of that warm interest, that feeling of intimate concern, that sense, as it were, of home, which it should be the business of the orator to excite. In what precise degree philosophical discussion may enter into a popular

* 'Quarterly Review,' No. 7. August 1810. Review of Giffard's 'Life of Pitt.' — The article was written by Mr. Robert Grant.

oration, there can be no occasion to consider, so long as we recollect that, being in its very nature extraneous, it can hardly appear too little; nor is it, therefore, intended to question the doctrine that an orator must build his reasonings on a solid basis of general principles. He must undoubtedly so build if he would not have his edifice overthrown by the first blast; but it is not the least important that this basis should be concealed from sight. The structure of his composition must be reared on the most massive foundations, while in semblance it is self-poised and pensile. His oratory throughout must be governed by an enlarged philosophy, but a philosophy which, though hidden from sense, is yet (we make the allusion with reverence) distinctly visible in its effects."

But it is only on rare occasions that the true orator of the House of Commons has to nerve himself for the heights of the art. His reputation is more habitually fixed according to the strength and facility with which he moves upon level ground; and it is here more especially that Pitt excelled all his rivals. In the formal introduction of a question, in the perspicuity of explanation in detail, in short and apt rejoinder in business-like debate, no man was so delightful to listen to: the decorum of his bearing, the fluency of his diction, the exquisite lucidity of his utterance, must have been a relief to Fox's preliminary stutter, shrill key-note, lifted fist, and redundant action — to Burke's Irish brogue and episodical discursions.

But above all, whether in rare orations or in every-day debate, Pitt possessed that one incomparable quality of uniform earnestness, which brings the character of the man to bear upon the effects of the speaker:

"Sermo imago animi — qualis vir, talis et oratio."

Thus, as one who enjoyed the privileges of a witness and a listener expresses it: —

"The distinguishing excellence of his speaking corresponded to the distinguishing excellence of his whole mental system; every part of his speaking, in sentiment, in language, and in delivery, evidently bore in our judgment the stamp of his character — all communicated to us a definite yet vivid appearance of the qualities of strenuousness without effort, unlaboured intrepidity, and serene greatness." *

Hence not only in the degree, but in the style and character of his eloquence, not only in the culture and power of his intellect, but in its harmony to the uses on which it was concentred — not only in the accident of circumstances favourable to his fortunes, but in the judgment that scanned, the prudence that weighed, the readiness which seized, and the moral dignity which ennobled the occasions proffered to ambition, we may find the main causes which secured to Pitt his early supremacy of power. But a cause more operative than all was in his remarkable sympathy with the public opinion of his time. He and the people seemed thoroughly to understand each other. Nor must it be forgotten, that Pitt stood before the electors who returned the majority that secured his power, in the character of a practical Reformer. He might have been the choice of the King, but he could never have won the enthusiasm of the people if he had left to Mr. Fox the monopoly of popular opinions. To have rejected the India Bill would not have been enough, if he had not replaced it by an India Bill of his own. To have de-

* 'Quarterly Review,' No. 7. August 1810. Review of Giffard's 'Life of Pitt.'

fended the prerogative of the Crown would have little bested him, if he had not made yet more conspicuous his zeal for the purity of the House of Commons, and his care for the liberties of the people. The position thus won was, however, beset with difficulties, the variety and magnitude of which startle the retrospection. The new election still left him alone on the Treasury bench, to encounter the same mighty leaders of debate against whose united eloquence it seemed but a few months before to many of his wisest friends — seemed almost to his own resolute mind — impossible to carry on the business of the Government. All hope of converting such foes into allies was gone. He was pledged to various reforms, with Lord Thurlow for his colleague and George III. for his sovereign. To retain the countenance of the King, to preserve union in the Cabinet, yet to convince the people of his good faith and integrity, was a task in which a vigilant Opposition might well hope to expose his failure, and strand him upon either shoal — royal desertion or popular reprobation. His majority in the House of Commons, however large, was composed of sections that seemed little likely long to amalgamate — here, the opponents to every change, who saw in Pitt but the destroyer of the Whigs; and there, the ardent enthusiasts, who hailed him as the representative of progress.

If the personal difficulties of the minister were thus great, little had occurred to improve the prospects of the country since the date at which, in an earlier part of this sketch, we reviewed its calamitous and menacing condition. True that peace was now concluded; but that peace, not less galling to her pride because essential to the very springs of her existence, found England

utterly drained of blood and treasure. Her utmost resources were believed to be inadequate to meet the debt she had incurred. Her income, unable to support even a peace establishment, was three millions less than her expenditure, including the interest of an enormous unfunded debt. Credit was still shaken to its centre by the startling fall of the funds under the preceding government: the three per cents. were between 56 and 57. The chances of a national bankruptcy furnished a theme to solemn pamphlets and despondent talk. Our military power appeared literally annihilated. At the close of the war 3000 men were the utmost force that could have been safely sent forth on any offensive duty; and even Pitt had been compelled, in defending the treaties of peace, to show that our naval supremacy had melted into a "visionary fabric." In the eyes of foreign nations the name of England was more abased than when the Dutch admiral had swept the Thames with his besom. For her weakness was now considered not the consequence of a malady, not the effect of a blow, but the fatal symptom of incurable decay. "No man," said Mirabeau, in one of his early writings, "would believe me when I prophesied that England would yet recover — that there was enough sap in her boughs to repair the loss of their leaves." At home the discontent which disasters abroad invariably produce was aggravated by the prospects of additional burthens, and fraught with danger to monarchy itself, by the contagion of those principles which, identifying freedom with absolute democracy, in America had established, and in France were preparing, a republic. The state of Ireland alone, in spite of concessions, which, indeed, by separating

her more from the sister kingdom, rather tended to restore her to anarchy than reconcile her factions to social order, was sufficiently critical to demand the most temperate forethought, and strain the most vigorous intellect. An army of volunteers numbering not less than 40,000, and according to some authorities exceeding 70,000 men, had for four years occupied the island, defied its parliament, startled the streets of its metropolis with files of soldiers (opening a path to the congregation of political reformers), and dictated to either kingdom "as a national convention of military delegates," acting under no legal control; holding no communication with the executive, and equally formidable as subjects justly aggrieved and insurgents treasonably armed.

A future occasion may be found to pursue the marvellous career which commenced under difficulties so complicated — dangers so alarming. That in the scope of the survey, errors in policy, fallacies in opinion will appear, no rational admirer of Mr. Pitt will dispute; but the more minute the criticism, the more salient will become the countervailing merits of rectitude and wisdom; the more partial inconsistencies will vanish in the symmetry of uniform principles regulating definite and majestic action — the more the graver charges which the carelessness of the public has permitted to the injustice of party will receive the contradiction of facts, and Despotism and Intolerance lose all pretext to the sanction of that logical intellect and liberal heart. Yet to others less restricted in space and more competent to the task than ourselves, we would fain commend the ample and searching inquiry how a Sovereign whom Temple pronounced to be ungrateful,

and Shelburne insincere, — who possessed, even more than a Tudor, the always kingly, often perilous, faculty of *Will* — who had induced North for three years to belie his deepest convictions — who had compelled Yorke, in spite of honour the most sensitively fastidious, to violate his promise to Lord Rockingham, accept the Great Seal, and hurry home to die, whether of noble grief or by his own despairing hand* — with whom every minister hitherto brought in contact, had wrecked either public character or political ambition; how a Sovereign made so dangerous to his councillors, not less by his virtues than his faults, was conciliated without loss of personal integrity or popular favour; how the people expecting so much, and necessarily in some

* "My brother," says Lord Hardwicke, in his journal, "went into the levee, was called into the closet, and in a manner *compelled* by the King. At his return from Court, about three o'clock, he broke in upon me, who was talking with Lord Rockingham, and gave us the account. We were both astounded, to *use an absolete but strong word*, at so sudden an event; and I was particularly shocked at his being so overborne, in a manner I had never heard of, nor could imagine possible between subject and prince." Lord Hardwicke adds, in a letter to Lord Rockingham, "My poor brother's entanglement was such as history can scarce parallel." On the 17th Yorke had accepted the Great Seal; on the 20th he was a corpse. "A mystery," says Lord Albemarle ('Rockingham's Memoirs,' vol. II. p. 164), "still hangs over the immediate cause of his decease; it was known that his death was attended by a copious effusion of blood. This was attributed to bursting a blood-vessel, and to having been bled four times. Walpole says that every one believed he had fallen by his own hand, — whether on his sword or by a razor was uncertain."

hopes disappointed, yet continued to rally heart and hand round the lofty, tranquil, solitary minister; how from the attitude of a despairing suppliant to which Fox had humbled her at the footstools of Frederic and Joseph, dismissed here with a shrug of the shoulders, there with a sneer of disdain, England, exalted by those mighty hands, rose high above the Royalities that had looked down upon her sorrow; her exhausted resources multiplied a thousand-fold, her imposts but increasing her wealth by stimulating her recruited energies; her malcontents united to her laws; her empire consolidated in Ireland, as in India, from its centre to its verge; and realizing, in the tribute to her marts and the reverence yielded to her flag, the aspirations of Chatham and even the designs of Cromwell; how, amidst the storm which swept from France the institutions of man and the monuments of God, her altars became more reverenced and the orb more assured to her sceptre; and how, when reluctantly COMPELLED into war which suspended the reforms but not the prosperity of peace, that Nation, when Pitt came to its succour, without the power to recruit the remnants of a beaten army, and contemplating bankruptcy as a relief from its burthens, coped, and not vainly, with him who united the hosts of Charlemagne to the genius of Alexander, saved, for ends nobler far than conceived by their owners, the thrones it retained as the landmarks of Europe, and, animated by the soul breathed into its ranks even when that soul was on earth no more, ensured the crowning victory by which the hand of Wellington accomplished the thought of Pitt.

PYM *versus* FALKLAND.

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PYM *versus* FALKLAND.

[1. *The Debates on the Grand Remonstrance, November and December*, 1641. By JOHN FORSTER.
2. *Arrest of the Five Members by Charles I.; a Chapter on English History Re-written.* By JOHN FORSTER.]

THE characteristics of Mr. Forster's mind are, in many respects, eminently fitted to the subjects he selects for historical disquisition. He finds his heroes in men who were thoroughly in earnest, and earnestness is the distinguishing attribute of his own vigorous understanding. To much patience of research he unites a remarkable power of generalization, and he groups his details so as to render clear and prominent the facts he desires to enforce. His style itself is in accordance with his theme — solid and impressive; animated, where occasion permits, with a severe and manly eloquence. As his nature is hearty and his convictions deep, so his preferences cannot fail to be decided. But if such preferences sometimes warp his judgment, a similar charge must, more or less, apply to every historical commentator on the period from which, as it is truly said, "the factions of modern times trace their divergence."

And those men, to whom the preferences of Mr. Forster are thus boldly given and openly avowed, are

never to be spoken of without respect, nor judged without a certain degree of indulgence, by critics whose opinions are disciplined by the study of our history, and whose sentiments are warmed by an appreciation of our freedom. To those men, illustrated afresh by the learning and the eloquence of the writer whose works are now before us, we owe lasting obligations; but not the least obligations are the warnings which their errors have bequeathed.

With a masterly hand Mr. Forster has shaped forth the large image of Pym, and has placed it on the height which its proportions demand. Pym was, in fact, not only the most popular man at that time in England, but, perhaps, as a practical politician, the ablest and most effective. What Mr. Disraeli said of the late Sir R. Peel may more accurately be said of Pym — "he was the greatest Member of Parliament that ever lived." He thoroughly understood his audience and his theatre. No business was too large, none too small for him. Historians before Mr. Forster have failed to make clear to the reader the prodigious power of this man's nature. Mr. Forster is the first who shows him as his age knew; let us add that Mr. Forster too fondly judges him as his followers judged. Pym, more than Hampden, and far more than Vane, represents the House of Commons in its quarrel with Charles from the date of the Grand Remonstrance to the day when Pym himself was buried at Westminster amongst the monuments of kings, feebler and less despotic than himself. He was a chief who united most of the qualities that serve and adorn the leader of party: pre-eminent experience in public affairs, unrelaxing vigilance in the attention bestowed on them,

profound mastery in those ready tactics by which occasions to weaken or wound an adversary are fearlessly seized and unscrupulously improved. Even his personal appearance favoured the part he played. Nature gave him the burly frame that impresses the eye with a sense of power, and the broad front that seems to defy enmity and invite confidence. His eloquence was more elaborate than Clarendon's description would lead a reader unacquainted with his speeches to infer. Ready in debate and ingenious in reply, there is yet the evidence of much careful preparation in his more important harangues; the arguments are arranged with the deliberate logic of written composition, and enforced or embellished with no common rhetorical skill. Tinged, but not imbued, with the religious colourings of the day, his style is chastened to a more neutral tint than that which offends a cultivated taste in most of the Puritan leaders. It is impossible not to recognise in his discourses, as in his actions, a consummate man of the world: he had lived more in general society, and familiarized his reasonings more with the ideas of a metropolis, than most of his associates. He was free from the formal affectations of the Puritans in his manners as in his dress. He was proverbially gallant to women; and tempers so disposed are generally hearty and genial in their intercourse with men. He was careless in money matters; and it is perhaps to his honour that he died in embarrassed circumstances. The House of Commons voted 10,000*l.* to the payment of his debts — a large sum, considering the value of money at that time. Rigid probity in pecuniary matters was not the special attribute of the Parliamentarian

party, after the events of the Civil War permitted them to tamper with the resources exclusively at their control. Making allowance for partial untruth and general exaggeration in the account of the manner in which the anti-Royalist members of the House of Commons contrived to enrich themselves, which was published after the abrupt dissolution of the Long Parliament — cupidity and corruption, whether in the malappropriation of public money or the transfer of private property subjected to forfeit and sequestration, were as shameless, even amongst the more respectable patriots of "the Supreme Council," as might be expected from representatives who had long ceased to hold themselves accountable to constituents. But though Pym is accused by Clarendon of a due share in the prevalent frailty, the accusation is much too unsupported to allow us to accept against Pym himself the evidence on which he would have ruthlessly condemned an opponent. For he was a hearty hater; and whether sincerely suspicious or politically uncharitable, he deepened every shadow that fell upon an adversary. Honest Jack Lee, more than a century later, vehemently upbraided some fellow Whig for betraying the interests of the party in a chance remark, "that the Duke of Richmond (then separated from the Whigs) was a very handsome man." Jack Lee was a politician after Pym's own heart. Pym can see nothing but deformity when he looks at an antagonist. It would be ludicrous, had the consequences been less tragic, to observe the gravity with which he accepts the absurdest rumours as the most conclusive testimonies, if only those rumours affect the King or the King's friends; and how, undisturbed by the substantial dangers in which his panic, real or

assumed, involves his country, he keeps the public in constant terror by denunciations of visionary massacres and impracticable plots. In the casuistry which a subtle intellect adapts to the popular understanding, Pym was unsurpassed. With equal skill he could defend as a sacred bulwark, or brush aside as a gossamer cobweb, the laws and constitution of the realm. In the prosecution of Strafford, when laws and constitution are plainly insufficient to establish the capital crime of high treason, Pym resolves society itself into its first principles, and mounts from the Plantagenets up to primeval Nature for a precedent that may crush his victim. Statutes fail, testimonies are defective; "But," cries Pym, "the Earl is condemned by the light of Nature, the light of common reason — the element of all laws out of which they are derived, the end of all laws to which they were designed." But small account does Pym make of the "light of Nature," "the light of reason," and the "element of all laws," when those venerable guides to human polity rebuke the vindictive passions which he invoked them to sanction and assist. That a wife should aid her husband in his peril is a truth more agreeable to the "light of Nature" and "the element of all laws" than that a political offender should be condemned to death, not by the laws of his country, but by abstract propositions on the origin of society. Yet when the Queen brings a small force to the assistance of Charles, Pym — the woman-lover, Pym — heads that barbarous impeachment against the Queen for high treason, which the just resentment of Mr. Hallam stigmatises as a "violation of the primary laws and moral sentiments that preserve human society."

But if Pym had the vehemence of Achilles, he had no less notably the craft of Ulysses. He could avail himself of the most dishonourable agencies, yet with such adroitness and plausibility that, in the eyes of the public, their dishonour did not sully himself. He converted into his most serviceable spy the mistress of Strafford, the confidante of Henrietta. The object of Lady Carlisle in her unspeakable perfidy must always remain a mystery. We dismiss, as a conjecture irreconcilable with the slightest knowledge of human nature, the supposition that she desired to avenge on Charles the death of Strafford, which was compassed by Pym; nor, though Pym was as much accused of licentiousness by his enemies as Strafford had been by his, do we believe that the intercourse between Pym and Lady Carlisle was that of criminal love. But she was debased into his compliant tool by the same power of character which had charmed her in Strafford. Nothing is more common amongst women of that stamp than a kind of slavish idolatry, not so much of intellectual eminence as of the reputation that belongs to it. They fall in love with celebrity, and flatter themselves that they thus gain equality with genius. He reconciled the sanctimonious purism of the younger Vane to an act which in our day would exclude its perpetrator from the pale of gentlemen, and which barbed with a just insult Cromwell's exclamation, "The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" We refer to the paper which cost Lord Strafford his head, and we take Vane's own account of his conduct respecting it. He said, "that his father, being in the North with the King the summer before, had sent up his keys to his secretary, then at Whitehall, and had written to him,

his son, that he should take from him those keys which opened his boxes where his writings and evidences of his land were, to the end that he might cause an assurance to be perfected which concerned his wife." The case so far stands thus: the elder Vane, then Secretary of State, and as such sworn to keep secret the affairs of council within his cognizance, intrusts his son with the power to search amongst certain receptacles for a strictly private paper affecting that son's marriage settlement. The son was not then a youth new to public affairs, and ignorant of the sanctity of his father's obligations to secrecy. He himself had been a governor in Virginia; he was at that time a servant of the Crown as Treasurer of the Navy; he was therefore necessarily aware of the duties that attach to office, and the inviolable respect that is due to official documents. Well, then, the younger Vane, having found the private papers which alone he had been permitted to look for, and "despatched what depended thereon," states that "he had the *curiosity* to desire to see what was in a red velvet cabinet that stood with the other boxes, and therewith required the key of that cabinet from the secretary, as if he still wanted something towards the business his father had directed. Here, then, is a public man, a gentleman, who, trusted with keys for a special purpose confined to his own private affairs, coolly owns to the unutterable baseness and breach of trust of prying into a cabinet which he is not privileged to open, and tells his father's secretary a deliberate lie, in order to obtain the key. On opening this cabinet he finds that it contains the official papers which his father is sworn to keep secret from him as from all men. What would

have been the first impulse of any man of the most ordinary honour? Surely to have veiled his eyes and relocked the cabinet. Young Vane on the contrary determinately sets to work to read them. He finds the very notes taken by his father as Secretary of State, part of them couched in cipher. He has thus his father's official honour and sworn oath in his hands. He still reads on — no cipher is sacred to him; and having discovered in these notes something that appears to implicate the man with whom, by the way, himself and his father have a personal quarrel, he deems himself bound in conscience to communicate the contents to some person of better judgment than himself. And the person he selects out of the whole world to show the notes officially taken by his father at the King's council-board, and the implications therein contained against his father's official colleague, is the head of the opposition to the King, and the bitterest and most ruthless personal enemy of the man against whom he has detected an evidence which it was dishonour and perfidy in himself to have seen. He shows it to Pym, lets Pym take a copy of it; and, then, without a word to his father, replaces it in the velvet cabinet. We take the younger Vane's own account, and do not add to it Lord Clarendon's belief that the whole was a trick between the two Vanes for the purpose of destroying Strafford, against whom they had a grudge. And we know not which conveys a lower estimate of personal honour — the act itself, or the unconscious ignoring of the most self-evident obligations of social life with which the tale was confessed and gloried in.

The use made of the document is of a piece with the manner in which it was obtained. Though the

pretence for giving to Pym a copy of it was the imminent danger with which the kingdom was threatened, it was kept concealed for several months, and the secret possession of it thus led to the fraudulently-obtained introduction of the monstrous clause in the bill of attainder against Lord Strafford, "to make one witness, with divers circumstances, as good as two."

With regard to Strafford himself, he was so formidable to liberty, both from his designs and from his genius, that the popular party were justified in all attempts to remove him from the king's councils, and incapacitate him from returning to them. But his sentence was an outrage on the laws of England, and the speech in which St. John, as Solicitor-General, stated that, "though the testimony against Strafford was not clear, yet in this way of bill private satisfaction to each man's conscience was sufficient, and that the Earl had no title to plead law, because he had broken the law," was an exposition of principle that made every life in England insecure.

Pym's political opinions at the commencement of the Long Parliament were not extreme. His intimacy with the Earl of Bedford, so long as that great nobleman lived to influence the councils of the popular party, combined with his own worldly sense to keep him aloof from the democratic rant of a Haselrig and the theological crotchets of a Vane. Even after the Earl of Bedford's death "he was not," says Clarendon, "of those furious resolutions against the Church as the other leading men were. . . . . Mr. Pym was concerned and passionate in the jealousies of religion, and much troubled with the countenance which had been given to those opinions that had been imputed to Arminius, yet him-

self professed to be very entire to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England." And in civil polity, Mr. Forster truly observes, "Even Hampden's accession, after his return from Scotland, to what was called the Root-and-branch Party of the State had not entirely carried Pym along with it." But if Pym's political tenets were comparatively temperate, such temperance was rendered practically valueless by the heat of his political animosities. Mr. Hallam ascribes the errors of the Commons in the Long Parliament "to the excess of two passions, resentment and distrust." And the chief cause of Pym's popularity was the conspicuous fidelity with which he represented those two passions in their excess. Thus, partly by temper, partly by position as a political leader, he was rapidly carried on to a course of action utterly inconsistent with the theoretical doctrines which he had the credit of holding, and was soon only to be distinguished from the Strodes and the Haselrigs by the superior capacity with which he gave to violent aggressions the character of sage precautions. In times of revolutionary excitement or popular agitation, no leader is so dangerous to order as he who, commending violence, makes the public believe he himself has no wish to be violent. For moderation seems to be struck out of all councils which the time can admit, when the man who is respected as moderate heads the men who are feared as extreme. To the Root-and-branch Party Pym gave vigour and authority precisely because he did not wholly belong to it. And many a timid politician became gradually familiarised to the destruction of the monarchy, till the scaffold of Charles rose above its wrecks, by that phraseology of decorous moderation in which Mr. Pym — no

Root-and-branch man — clothed the darkest insinuations against the King with professions of devoted affection for His Majesty; and, insisting on the sanctity of the constitution, argued all its elements away.

Such was the man who, as Clarendon tersely expresses it, "was the most able to do hurt that hath lived in any time." Such was the man who, had he so pleased, was at that time the most able to do good. In his strong hands were peace and the freedom already won; civil war, and its inexorable consequence — the subjugation of freedom to military force. Pym made his choice: we will examine it.

The first proceedings of the Long Parliament were characterised by the vigour of patriots and the wisdom of statesmen, who saw clearly before them objects essential to good government, and compatible with the genius of the constitution they reformed. Within less than a year from the opening of that Parliament the Triennial Bill was passed; shipmoney declared to be illegal; the power of arbitrary taxation by the Sovereign annulled; the Star-chamber abolished. The Court of High Commission, with the jurisdiction of inferior but oppressive tribunals — such as the Courts of the President and Council of the North, of Wales and the Welch Marches — no longer obstructed the broad and open current of English justice. The unpopular and feudal encroachments of the Crown in forest boundaries were permanently repressed; and not only was the normal constitution of England thus purified from the abuses which Charles and his predecessors had introduced, but, as Mr. Hallam remarks, "it was formed such nearly as it now exists."

The merit of these great achievements is not to be

ascribed solely to the men who, at a subsequent period under Pym, constituted the popular party. It is due in an equal degree to the politician of a more temperate school, amongst whom Lord Falkland is conspicuous even less for the culture of an exquisite intellect than the sincerity of an incorruptible patriotism. A royalist peer, Lord Andover, made the first motion for the abolition of the Star Chamber. Hyde was Chairman of the Committee which brought in the Bill for abolishing the Court of York. Members of either House of Parliament in whom the pride of descent and the interests of property gave reasonable hostages for the safety of order amidst changes propitious to freedom, were the earliest champions of reforms that retrenched the royal prerogative and the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. And it is noticeable that foremost in the van of reform are the names of those whose families had held high place in the courts or councils of the Tudors — the Russells, the Sidneys, the Seymours, the Cecils, the Lyttons. The amount of property in the House of Commons itself was immense, and must be recognised as a principal cause of the paramount influence it so rapidly acquired. In one of the earlier parliaments of the reign the wealth of the members of the Lower House was computed at three times (at least) the amount of the wealth to be found in the Upper; it could not have been much less at the commencement of that Long Parliament which, after the civil war, recruited its emptying benches with fanatical adventurers whose fortunes were as needy as their spirit was sordid and their intelligence savage. We approach the time when the phalanx, hitherto united in the constitutional redress *of genuine grievances*, became divided; when Falkland

was severed from the side of Pym — when Holborne, the eloquent lawyer against ship-money, argued no less warmly in defence of the Anglican Church: — we must ask ourselves to which of these two classes of reformers was rational liberty the most indebted: the class that was contented with obtaining those solid results which at the distance of two centuries we now enjoy, or the class that deliberately risked the chances of civil war for the sake of objects which, as we will show later, have never been attained to this day, — and never could be attained without the annihilation of all the tempered attributes by which the freedom of a limited monarchy saves a state from the uncontrolled despotism of a popular chamber, or the iron order of military rule.

We must, however, start from one capital cause of all the later calamities that befell the time, and in which all subdivisions of the popular party must share the blame. That cause is found in the first direct violation on the part of the Long Parliament, not only of the English Constitution, but of every principle of safe government, by which monarchy and representative institutions can be brought into concord. We mean the Act hurried through all its stages in the House of Commons in two days, and by which the Parliament could not be dissolved without its own consent. It was passed by the Lords simultaneously with the attainder of Strafford, and it was pretended that the Act was necessary to prevent Charles from saving his Minister by dissolving the Parliament that impeached him.

But the Lords, in a conference with the Commons, had suggested an amendment that would have equally disabled the King from quashing the proceedings against

Strafford, while it would have saved the State from an outrage by which in fact the People were set aside long before the Monarchy was abolished. The Lords proposed in this conference that the Act against the dissolution of Parliament without the consent of both Houses should be limited to two years; if, therefore, the popular leaders had only required a security against Charles for the purpose of justice upon Strafford, this amendment would have been accepted as effectual for the object in view; unhappily the Commons adhered to their original demand, — the Lords yielded, — the King consented, — and in three days the Constitution of England was virtually destroyed. A House of Commons was changed into an irresponsible tribunal, independent of the most salutary prerogative of the Crown, and only by its own consent made amenable to constituents for the use of its powers.

It is evident that thus, if the dissensions between King and Commons continued, there could be no appeal to the people for arbitration except by the sword; and by this Act, therefore, men who looked towards the chances of the future were compelled to familiarize their eyes to the prospect of civil war.

But whatever may be said of the pretexts for this calamitous measure, the House of Commons had thus obtained precisely that, the alleged want of which constitutes the apology made by Mr. Forster and other admirers of the extreme popular party for the subsequent exactions and excesses to which that party was impelled. They obtained security against the King's practical power to restore arbitrary rule. The House of Commons had already deprived the King of all means to obtain money without their consent: they proved in

their proceedings against Strafford and Laud the stern reality of their privilege to hold responsible by the heaviest penalties the advisers whom the Crown might select; and by thus securing their own continued existence, they effected a guarantee against the King, immeasurably stronger than any which at this hour the reformed House of Commons has against any Sovereign who may harbour designs similar to those ascribed to Charles I., and cover those designs by the popular qualities and the genius for affairs, the want of which made Charles himself impotent against his enemies and fatal to his friends.

We think that Mr. Forster loses sight of this security throughout the whole of his reasonings, and that it never ought to be forgotten by those who look into his animated pages for the vindication of the Grand Remonstrance and its impassioned partisans.

We now approach the date of this famous memorial. Let us pause for a moment and allow Mr. Forster "to seize the occasion to observe where some of the prominent people sit."

"The member whose manuscript record chiefly has been quoted, Sir Simonds D'Ewes, will guide us to the knowledge here and there, in jotting down his own speeches: for as it was then the custom to avoid mention as well of the place represented as of the member's name, the principal mode of indicating a previous speaker was by some well-known personal quality, or by his position in the house. Sir Simonds himself sat usually by the Speaker's chair, on the lowermost form close by the south end of the clerk's table; and there, whatever the subject of debate might be, or the excitement going on around him, this precise self-satisfied puritan gentleman sat, *writing*-apparatus forming part of his equipment,

his eyes close to the paper (for their sight was defective), and ever busily taking his Notes; but it was his custom, when he spoke, to go up two steps higher, that he might more easily be heard by the whole house. In this position, Mr. Harry Marten, the member for Berkshire, was, 'the gentleman below.' Mr. Pym, the acknowledged chief of the majority of the Commons, is ever in his 'usual place near the Bar,' just beyond the gallery on the same right-hand side of the house at entering. Sir John Culpeper, member for Kent, and so soon to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, is 'the gentleman on the other side of the way.' He sat upon the left-hand side; and near him, most generally together, sat Hyde and Falkland; Mr. Geoffrey Palmer, the member for Stamford, and Sir John Strangways, sitting near. On the same side at the upper end, on the Speaker's right, sat the elder Vane, member for Wilton, for a few days longer Secretary of State and Treasurer of the Household; near whom were other holders of office. Sir Thomas Jermyn, his Majesty's Comptroller, who sat for Bury St. Edmund's; Sir Edward Herbert, the Attorney-General, who sat for Old Sarum; Oliver St. John, the Solicitor-General, member for Totness, still holding the office in the King's service which had failed to draw him over to the King's side; Mr. Coventry, member for Evesham and one of the King's house; and young Harry Vane, member for Hull, and Joint-treasurer of the Navy; all sat in this quarter, on the Speaker's right. Near them sat also Mr. Edward Nicholas, Clerk of the Council, soon to be *Sir* Edward and Secretary of State in place of Windebank, now an anxious auditor and spectator of this memorable debate, which he was there to report to the King. Between these members and Hyde, on the same side of the house, sat the member for Wilton, Sir Benjamin Rudyard; Sir Walter Earle; William Strode; and lawyer Glyn, the member for Westminster. Mr. Herbert Price, the member for Brecon, with Mr. Wilmot, member for Tamworth, and a knot of young courtiers, sat at the lower end of the house on the *same side,* immediately on the left at entering. John Hamp-

den sat on the other side, behind Pym; and between him and Harry Marten, sat Edmund Waller; on one of the back benches, Cromwell; not far from him, Denzil Hollis; and under the gallery, the member for Oxford University, the learned Mr. Selden. Near him sat lawyer Maynard, the other member for Totness; and over them, in the gallery itself, that successful lawyer Mr. Holborne; Sir Edward Dering; and the member for Leicestershire, Sir Arthur Haselrig. But our list must come to a close."

This is a masterly example of the best and truest kind of historical scene-painting. The hints from which the sketch is furnished forth could only be gleaned by a mind quick to discern and trained to discriminate, while they are so carefully arranged as not to violate but to render vivid the fidelity of the outlines to which they lend the freshness of colour and the movement of life. So much for the scene. A word or two now on the time in which it is enacted.

The great reforms we have cited have been effected. The execution of Strafford has deprived the King of the only man who united the desire for arbitrary government with a genius equal to the accumulating difficulties of so criminal an ambition. The King himself, with an acuteness that he rarely evinced, has recognised that simple mode of reconciling the powers of a free Parliament with the safety of monarchical institutions, by which in our own day the business of the State is carried on. He has sought to form an administration from the party which had a prevalent influence in Parliament. Through the patriotic interposition of the Earl of Bedford, the popular movement was to be regulated to the ends compatible with constitutional monarchy by imposing on the conscience of its leaders

the responsibilities that attach to advisers of the Crown. Pym was to have been Chancellor of the Exchequer, Denzil Hollis Secretary of State, Hampden, Lord Essex, and Lord Say to have had suitable places in the Administration. Unhappily the Earl of Bedford's sudden death frustrated these negotiations; but at least they were assurances that the King was not unprepared to admit of that solution of the difficulties of the time, which is alone consonant with the genius of the free Government that the popular party sought to effect; and even in spite of the Earl's death, Charles at least made such advances in that wise direction as were in his power. Lord Essex, the popular idol, was appointed Lord Chamberlain; St. John, the intimate associate of Hampden and Pym, had been appointed Solicitor-General at the beginning of the Parliament. It was the obvious duty of calm statesmen and true patriots to have hailed these attempts to establish Parliamentary government on its natural basis, and to have assisted and encouraged the King in maturing out of such attempts an administration which in itself would be another guarantee for the liberties already achieved. We do not think, therefore, that Mr. Forster justly represents the conduct of the men he refers to, or the character of the time he depicts, by such a paragraph as this: —

"Immediately after the execution of Strafford, which Hyde and his associates helped more largely than any other section of the House to accomplish, they began steadily and secretly to employ every artifice and all the advantages which their position in the Commons gave them to bring about a reaction favourable to the King."

We think it a more correct interpretation of their policy to say, that as with Strafford's death died the last chance of restoring arbitrary rule — except indeed by the force of arms in the chances of civil war — so the more temperate and far-seeing members of the popular party wished no longer to inflame those contests between the Monarchy and the Commons, which might end in the destruction of one or the other; but rather to reconcile both, as in case of disagreement they would be reconciled now, through the medium of councillors whom the confidence of Parliament might commend to the service of the Crown. Hyde did in this but carry out the same policy by which the Earl of Bedford would have transferred Hampden and Pym from the lead of the Opposition to the guidance of the King. Nor does Mr. Forster appear to us to have any warrant for the assumption that, "with so much semblance of amended administration and such pretences of half-popular measures as the ingenuity of Hyde could furnish, if Charles could be brought to concede only so much, there was yet the means of striking a heavy blow for recovery of the old prerogative."

For Hyde himself, though no doubt he became more and more of a Royalist in proportion as the uses of Royalty were made clear by its trial and fall — in proportion as liberty was whirled on through the phases of fanatic revolution, to be debased by a Barebones and deposed by a Cromwell; yet, at the time Mr. Forster refers to, Hyde would certainly have aided no blow for the recovery of the "old prerogative," which, up to that moment, he had sought to check and abridge; nor do the State papers composed by himself, as the Royal replies and manifestoes, advance other doctrines

than those which at this day would be accepted by the advisers of a constitutional Sovereign. And we are sure that not Pym himself could more stubbornly than Falkland have resisted the restoration of those arbitrary powers against which no man had contended with steadier courage or nobler passion. Clarendon says, "nor had he (Lord Falkland) any veneration for the Court, but only such a loyalty to the King as the law required from him." This is clear from the dislike for Falkland which the more heated Cavaliers entertained, and their resentful fear of the conciliatory counsels which he urged upon the King after the war broke out.

The concessions that, whether yielded by or wrung from Charles at the commencement of the Long Parliament, had already changed a despotic into a limited monarchy, necessarily produced the effect which is the immediate consequence of great reforms in ancient institutions; they divided the Liberal party by making clear the differences amongst its members, which had been compromised or postponed till the objects on which there was agreement in common were achieved.

Falkland, for instance, was desirous of retrenching the civil powers of the hierarchy, and had differed from "his inseparable friend" Hyde, in speaking in favour of the Bill for taking away the Bishops' votes in Parliament. But Falkland was equally desirous of preserving the Anglican Church itself; and, when six months after he changed his opinion as to the Bishops' votes, and opposed a proposition similar to that which he had before approved, his public reply to Hampden's reproof for inconsistency seems to us a more intelligible excuse than it does to Mr. Forster, viz., that "he had been persuaded to believe many things which he had

since found to be untrue;" and when Mr. Forster says, "that what the alleged misrepresentations were has never been explained," he has overlooked Clarendon's statement* as to the question in point, viz., that Falkland had declared "that Mr. Hampden had assured him that, if that Bill might pass, nothing more would be attempted to the prejudice of the Church."

In a word, that happened then which happens daily now — moderate men discovered that the ulterior objects of associates with whom they had previously acted were such as, either long concealed or lately ripened out of new events, differed essentially from the objects for which they had at the onset accepted a companionship and shared a struggle. And with this separation of party, as necessarily there flowed back towards the King much of the loyalty that, lost by the errors of earlier misrule, was conciliated by the redress of grievances and the surrender of noxious powers. For the first time in his reign, Charles found partisans in men of enlightened opinions, of popular services, of great weight in Parliamentary discussion. Out of a loyalty thus dignified, not unreasoning and servile, the public began to gather confidence that the King might gain wise councillors, and the remaining differences between the Crown and the Commons be peacefully adjusted. It was confessedly to stem that current of returning loyalty and to convert that growing hope into fresh distrust, that Pym thus early framed and subsequently proposed the Grand Remonstrance.

The debates on this momentous question are given by Mr. Forster with a breadth and fulness of detail

* B. III. p. 152.

worthy of their importance. All that zeal, research, force of style, and felicity of arrangement can do to vindicate this measure and condemn its opponents has been done by Mr. Forster; but we must confess that we rise from the perusal of the case, thus eloquently advocated and adorned, with a profound conviction that the Grand Remonstrance was either a great blunder or a great crime. A great blunder, if Pym and his party were sincere in the opinions they professed, and cherished no desire for the abolition of monarchy and the downfall of the constitution; a great crime if, for the sake of such objects, they conspired to deepen the breach between large classes of their countrymen, and submit liberty and order to the hazards of civil war.

We think that Mr. Hallam, who is certainly not more partial to Charles than Mr. Forster himself, states the substance of the Remonstrance fairly, if succinctly, when he says, "This, being a recapitulation of all the grievances and misgovernment that had existed since his (Charles's) accession, which his acquiescence in so many measures of redress ought, according to the common courtesy due to Sovereigns, to have cancelled, was hardly capable of answering any other purpose than that of reanimating the discontents almost appeased, and guarding the people against the confidence they were beginning to place in the King's sincerity." Indeed, Mr. Forster himself does not deny that such were the objects, and these objects he employs his ingenuity to vindicate. We grant that there was enough in Charles's character to justify all reasonable precautions against the duplicity which constituted its main defect both as king and man. But we say with Mr. Hallam, *that,* "if he were intended to reign at all, or reign

with any portion either of the prerogatives of an English king or the respect claimed by every sovereign, the Remonstrance of the Commons would but prolong an irritation incompatible with public tranquillity." The Remonstrance itself was unfair in conception, exaggerated in statement, and a violent breach of constitutional practice in the manner in which it was introduced and shaped. Unfair in conception: because to enumerate evils that have been legally redressed under an existing system and a reigning sovereign, is to afford a reasonable presumption that the evils remaining may be equally redressed under the same sovereign and the same system; while this enumeration was so worded as to appeal to popular passion against both. Exaggerated in statement: for, as if the errors of Charles's earlier government were not sufficiently grave of themselves, the Remonstrance does not scruple to violate truth in the endeavour to heighten and to multiply them. It states, for instance, that the loss of the Rochelle fleet by the help of our shipping sent forth and delivered to the French was in opposition to the *advice* of Parliament, and led to the loss of that important place. But the plain fact is, not only that Parliament gave no advice on the matter, but that it was wholly unacquainted with the course Charles had adopted until the consequences became known; nor was the fleet nor the town of Rochelle lost by the help of our shipping, for the mariners of the English ships sent deserted rather than fight against the Huguenots. Again, the Remonstrance accuses Charles of forsaking the Elector Palatine by not continuing the war with Spain, when the fact was that for continuing that war the Parliament left him wholly without money. And to these danger-

ous attempts to envenom the national spirit against Charles's earlier administration, was added the more inflammable accusation against himself and his councillors, of originating and sustaining the rebellions and massacres in Ireland, upon evidence incredible to all dispassionate reasoners at that day — in our day wholly set aside — and in the teeth of Charles's earnest, but fruitless, appeals to his Parliament for help to put down the rebellion and punish the massacres. The Remonstrance was flagrantly unconstitutional in the mode and form in which it was sent forth. There is no valid reply to Sir John Culpeper's argument that all remonstrances should, by the spirit and the practice of the constitution, be addressed to the King and not to the people, because it belonged to the King only to redress grievances. But this memorial was not addressed to the King: it was an appeal to the people against the King. The sovereign is spoken of as a third person, and is made a defendant, with the Commons for his accuser and the public for his judge. This form of document was in itself a revolution without precedent in the history of the monarchy. It may be said, as it was said, that something in the nature of the particular time justified such departure from the constitution. But the particular time was one in which Charles had committed no overt act to justify a measure so aggressive; a time in which, as it is acknowledged, he was not alienating public opinion, but winning it back; and even the miserable plea that he was suspected of abetting the Irish rebellion, or that while in Scotland he was privy to attempts on Hamilton and Argyle, could not be urged: for the Remonstrance had in reality been predetermined by the revolutionary

leaders before the rebellion broke out in Ireland or the King had departed for Scotland. Still more unsound was the pretext that the Parliament required an apology for its past proceedings. As Culpeper truly said, "Parliament had not been scandaled by any public act, and needed not, therefore, any public declaration to clear itself."

Revolution is always begun when there is an appeal made to a people through unprecedented channels, foreign to their constitution, in denunciation of an established executive. Now, supposing that this was one of those rare crises in history in which such a revolution was inevitable or called for, it clearly would have become the one House of Parliament to have sought the co-operation of the other in giving to such an appeal the requisite character of dispassionate solemnity. But Pym and his party insisted on making the Remonstrance an act of the Commons, wholly apart from the other branch of the Legislature, and that upon arguments quoted from Pym's speech by Mr. Forster, which were utterly fallacious; — the one argument being that "many of the Lords were accused in the Remonstrance," the other that "it dealt throughout with subjects that had been only agitated in that House." The last argument is a direct untruth. The Remonstrance dealt with all the grievances of the reign which had been redressed by Act of Parliament and agitated alike in both Houses. And with regard to the first argument, members of the House of Commons were, in reality, as much accused as were members of the House of Lords; and unless the Commons meant to implicate, not individual peers, but the Upper Chamber itself, as well as the Throne, in the appeal to the people, justice de-

manded that the Lords at least should have the opportunity to consider and discuss the accusation levelled at any of their body.

The whole proceedings connected with this firebrand were in accordance with its violent and ominous nature. In the debate that the Declaration should be printed, Hyde had said that, "if the motion were persisted in, he should ask leave of the House to have liberty to enter his protest." On this a debate ensued, when, about one o'clock of the morning (we avail ourselves here of Mr. Forster's spirited narrative),

"Mr. Geoffrey Palmer, a lawyer of the Middle Temple, stood up. He should not be satisfied, he said, for himself or those around him unless a day should be at once appointed for discussion whether the right to protest did not exist in that House, and meanwhile he would move, with reference to such grave discussion, that the Clerk should note the names of all those whose claim to protest would then have to be determined.

"At these words the excitement broke out afresh; loud cries of 'All! All!' burst from every side where any of Hyde's party sat, and Palmer, carried beyond his first intention by the passion of the moment, cried out unexpectedly that he *did* for himself then and there protest, for himself and all the rest — 'of his mind,' he afterward declared that he meant to have added, but for the storm which suddenly arose.

"The word *All* had fallen like a lighted match upon gunpowder. It was taken up, and passed from mouth to mouth, with an exasperation bordering on frenzy; and to those who in after years recalled the scene, under that sudden glare of excitement after a sitting of fifteen hours, — the worn-out weary assemblage, the ill-lighted dreary chamber, the hour sounding One after midnight, confused loud cries on every *side breaking* forth unexpectedly, and startling gestures of

violence accompanying them, — it presented itself to the memory as a very Valley of the Shadow of Death. 'All! all!' says D'Ewes, was cried from side to side; 'and some waved their hats over their heads, and other took their swords in their scabbards out of their belts, and held them by the pummels in their hands, setting the lower part on the ground; so as, if God had not prevented it, there was very great danger that mischief might have been done. All those who cried *All, all*, and did the other particulars, were of the number of those that were against the Remonstrance.' And among them was the promising young gentleman of the King's house, Mr. Philip Warwick, the member for Radnor, who bethought him, as we have seen, of that brief Scriptural comparison from the wars of Saul and David, his application of which comprised all that, until now, was known to us of this extraordinary scene. He thought of what Abner said to Joab, and Joab to Abner, when they met on either side of the pool of Gibeon; and now, having arisen at the bidding of their leaders to make trial of prowess, their young men caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side, and so fell down together; a result which might have followed here, had not the sagacity and great calmness of Mr. Hampden, by a short speech, prevented it.

"It is not perhaps difficult to imagine, from what D'Ewes goes on to say of the short but memorable speech, with what exquisite tact and self-control this profound master of debate calmed down the passions of that dangerous hour. He saw at once that the motion for printing could not then with safety be persisted in; and, reminding the House that there might be many who, having supported the Remonstrance, might yet be opposed to the printing of it, he asked how any one could so far know the minds of such as to presume to enter a protest for *them?* 'Some who were against the printing of the Remonstrance,' says D'Ewes, 'yet disavowed Mr. Palmer's desiring to have a protestation entered in their names; *and Mr. Hampden demanded of him how he could know other men's minds?* To whom Mr. Palmer answered, having leave of the

House to speak, that he having once before heard the cry, 'All, All,' he had thereupon desired to have the said protestation entered in all their names.' "

But if Hampden had the merit of allaying the storm, Pym, the next day, must bear the blame of reviving it. There can be no doubt that Hyde was wrong in supposing the Commons had the right to protest, which custom has made a privilege of the Lords. There is as little doubt that Palmer, in the heat of the moment, had committed an indiscretion in his motion. But there is no doubt the other way, that Hyde had a perfect Parliamentary right to raise the question whether or not there was anything in the regulations and precedents established in one House of Parliament which should forbid its members to claim such a mode of recording opinion as had been adopted in the practice of the other House; and that, when Palmer had explained the intention of his cry, and apologised for any unpremeditated inadvertence, liberty of speech required that he should have no further punishment than a reprimand from the Chair. It seems scarcely credible that for this trivial fault the Pym party insisted that Mr. Palmer should be sent to the Tower, and that he was actually kept in that prison from the 26th of November to the 8th of December, on the morning of which day his humble petition, in which he acknowledged his offence and the justice of the House, obtained his discharge.

When the Remonstrance and the Petition conjoined with it were presented to the King by a committee appointed for that purpose, Charles, after saying very justly, "I suppose you do not expect me to answer now to so long a petition?" and adding, "As to this business of yours, I shall give you an

answer with as much speed as the weightiness of the business will permit" — accompanied the Royal message with a request that there might be no publishing of the Declaration till the House had received his answer. In the printing of the Remonstrance a few days after the Royal request to the contrary, Mr. Forster, we think, successfully vindicates the House of Commons from the charge of breach of faith with the King which Clarendon brings against it. The House of Commons had given no acquiescence to the request made by Charles. But we do not the less consider that the defiance of a request so reasonable in itself was an outrage upon that decent respect which is the safest privilege that subjects can concede to a sovereign. Having sought the redress of grievances in the Remonstrance, the House of Commons were bound to wait for a reply before calling in the popular passions to their aid, by the circulation of a vehement attack on the entire reign and character of their Sovereign. And when Mr. Forster so far confirms the expressions of Clarendon, "that that fatal Remonstrance poisoned the hearts of the people, and was the first inlet to the inundations," by saying "that such expressions are so many tributes to the vigour and capacity of his opponents, and to the largeness and wisdom of the outwork they had taken when they launched this Great Remonstrance," it seems to us that the simple reply to Mr. Forster is to be found in this fact, that the Remonstrance, having thus rendered a civil war inevitable, not only risked, but actually lost, that for which the Remonstrance contended. Mr. Forster cites as a proof of the gravity of the conjuncture, in final and lasting

vindication of the Remonstrance, Cromwell's declaration, that "if the Remonstrance had been rejected he would have sold all he had the next morning, and never seen England again." The man who thus spoke was the man who foresaw in the effect of the Remonstrance the opening to his ambition — the man who was enabled by the Remonstrance, not only to take the head from his Sovereign's shoulders, but the mace from the House of Commons. The Pym party, and all they strove for, disappeared amongst fierce fanatics, as the ignorant passions and the armed force they had invoked became the agents of hypocrisy and ambition. And when Liberty returned again with the advent of William of Orange, what returned with it? — the reforms demanded by Pym and his party — the abolition of prelacy? the substitution of a Presbyterian Kirk for the English hierarchy? laws against Papacy, as severe and unwise as were ever hatched against heretics in the conclave of an inquisition? the right of the House of Commons to the command of the army, and its more than Royal prerogative as the Supreme Council, whose simple ordinances had the force of law without assent of King or Lords? Not one of these things, be they good or bad. The reforms which were re-established, and which we now enjoy, were the reforms *not of Pym and St. John, but of Hyde and Falkland* — the reforms already achieved before the Grand Remonstrance was flung forth to substitute the soldier for the reformer — the reforms which the opponents of the Remonstrance sought to save from the perilous lottery into which the advocates of the Remonstrance cast them. All that we owe to the violent men are the military usurpation of Oliver

Cromwell, and the reaction to arbitrary monarchy under Charles II.

But the Remonstrance is printed. Events press on rapidly. Charles is hurried towards the fatal error which might have been anticipated by those who sought with pertinacious and malignant craft to exasperate all his infirmities of temper. But before we come to the attempted Arrest of the Five Members, it is at least just to Charles to set forth some of those insults that might have stung to imprudence a much calmer judgment, and some of those outrages on his most unquestionable prerogative which might have misled a prince much more temperate into the belief that aggression on his part had become necessary for the defence of his throne.

When, after the execution of Strafford, Charles went to Scotland, the Commons followed up an endeavour to appoint "a protector of the realm, to pass laws in his absence, without having recourse to the King," by ordinances that generally set aside his authority. In August, one to disarm recusants; in November, one authorising the Earl of Leicester to raise men for the defence of Ireland without a warrant under the Great Seal. Monarchy itself is incompatible with the assumptions in these acts, by which subjects are armed or disarmed without the assent of their monarch. Under pretext of seeing that the Articles of Pacification were executed, a committee of six are appointed to attend the King — in reality as spies upon his actions. It is with pain that we find the lofty name of Hampden among those debased by such an office. The care of this committee was to keep alive a chronic state of alarm throughout the kingdom: they communi-

cate to the Parliamentary Committee, which sat in London during the recess, "that when there was a design in England to seduce the King's army and interrupt the Parliament, there was the like design at that time in Scotland; that the principal party named in that design in Scotland, the Lord Crauford, is a person suspected to be popishly affected, and therefore may have correspondence with the like party in England." Upon these apprehensions the Commons propose, and the Lords agree, that there should be a strong guard kept in the cities of London and Westminster, and care taken for the defence of the whole kingdom; and that an express message be sent to the Committee of both Houses in Scotland that the Parliament of England was ready to give the Scots all necessary assistance against those who should disturb the peace; and the same day they order the Earl of Essex, who held commission from the King as General of the South of the Trent, to place a guard at Westminster for the security of Parliament, which was done.

These flagrant usurpations of regal authority, intended to excite the terror of England to the prejudice of Charles, were based upon an "incident," as it was called in the jargon of the day, that furnished not the slightest justification for proceedings so revolutionary. The account of this incident is given thus by Burnet in his Life of the Marquis of Hamilton. "A gentleman not known to the Marquis of Hamilton brought to him and the Earl of Argyle the discovery of a plot which he said was laid for their lives and the Earl of Lanerick's, which he said he could justify by one witness who was invited to the execution of it. The Marquis carried the tale to the King without naming

particulars, which could not be done safely by the law of Scotland, since he had but one witness to prove the treason by. The King desired him to sift the thing to the bottom, and bring him what further evidence he could find. In the evening other presumptions were brought to the Marquis, but no clear evidence, and Hamilton, with the other Scots Lords, and half-a-dozen servants, went to his country-house, twelve miles from Edinburgh, and sent his excuse to the King with an account of the reasons. The Scots Parliament took the whole matter into consideration; those who had given the information owned what they had said; those on whom the plot was fixed did as positively deny all. So that, no clear proof being brought, the Scots Parliament could come to no other decision, but that the Lords had good reason to withdraw themselves, and so they were invited to return to their places in Parliament, which they did." Whether we accept this version of the story, or that of Lord Clarendon, which implicates Montrose in a positive offer to Charles to kill both Argyle and Hamilton* — an expedient "which the King abhorred" — still it is indisputable that Charles himself courted the fullest and most public inquiry, a present trial in the face of the Scots Parlia-

* See, however, 'Quarterly Review,' vol. LXXIX. p. 10, where Mr. Mark Napier's defence of his hero is noticed. The main point in that defence is certainly a very strong one; that Montrose was, at the period referred to, a close prisoner in the hands of the enemies of himself and of the King, and could have had no personal access to Charles; while the assertion of Clarendon (who was not then in Scotland) is, that the proposal was made by Montrose to the King in a personal interview.

ment, and even shed tears in the passion with which he urged it; and obvious it is, that the Scots Parliament was the proper tribunal to sift the truth, and was certainly not then in a humour to spare the King, against whom the investigation that ensued could discover nothing. And it was on this matter which the Scots Parliament had full power to examine, that the English Parliament set aside the Constitution of England, and ordered the King's generals to dispose of the King's forces without the King's orders. The Rebellion in Ireland is raging; the House of Commons send instructions to their Committee of spies in Scotland, that they had just come to believe that the conspiracies and convulsions in Ireland were but the effects of the counsels of those who continued in credit, authority, and employment about His Majesty; and they accompany a prayer in itself constitutional and proper, if there were any counsellors against whom they could prove such a charge, with the following insolent and gratuitous threat, — "that if His Majesty did not condescend to their supplication, *they* should be forced to resolve upon some way of defending Ireland from the rebels, and of securing themselves from mischievous counsels and designs, and commend those aids and contributions which should be raised for the reducing of Ireland to the custody and disposing of such persons of honour and fidelity as *they* had cause to confide in."

It is impossible not to see in such language the complete negation of all the powers assigned to a Sovereign, however limited his functions. And the affront was the more ungracious, because Charles had devoted himself, during his stay in Scotland, to the

most liberal concessions to the popular party there; and, while his friends complained, not without justice, that they were neglected, preferments were lavished on Presbyterian preachers, and dignities on the popular chiefs.*

When Charles returned to London, having, by large surrenders of his prerogative and some bitter compromise of human pride, fully succeeded in his mission of pacifying Scotland, — when the Great Remonstrance so cruelly turns back the loyalty with which he is greeted in his metropolis, — though he very properly disallows the guard which Lord Essex had granted to Parliament during his absence, he offers another which the House of Commons refuse as appointed by the King — implying thereby that it is against the King himself they desire a guard. And on a tailor declaring that he had, when walking in the fields, overheard persons whom he did not know talk of a conspiracy to murder 108 Lords and Commoners by 108 ruffians, at the price of 10*l.* a Lord and 2*l.* a Commoner, the House of Commons order all priests and Jesuits to be seized, and the deputy-lieutenants of suspected counties to put the people in a posture of defence. While these sturdy patriots, with swords by their sides, were thus tenderly careful of their own safety, what is their conduct to the men

* Charles had the utmost difficulty in obtaining Montrose's release from prison only two days before his own departure from Scotland. Mr. Forster is in error when he says (p. 17) that "by the Crown's grace and favour Montrose was now (November, 1641) a Marquis." The warrant for his creation is dated at Oxford, the 4th May, 1644.

whose age and whose calling precluded them from self-defence? Twelve bishops, not threatened by the vague report of a tailor walking in the fields but hustled, jostled, and affronted by a disorderly mob, send a protestation addressed to the King and the Lords, to the effect that, though "they had an undoubted right to sit and vote in Parliament, they had been menaced and assaulted by the multitude, and could no longer with safety attend their duty. For this reason they protest against all laws, votes, and statutes, as null and invalid, which should pass during the term of their constrained absence."*

No man acquainted with English law, or with the plainest principles of civilized justice, can deny that the Prayer and Protest in themselves are perfectly warranted by principle, and are only questionable as to the fact alleged, and as to the remedy required. In the Introductory Essay prefixed to his work on the Grand Remonstrance (a treatise admirable in the terse compactness of well-meditated thought) Mr. Forster does not fail to place amongst the most solid stepping-stones of English liberty the statute passed under Edward I., "That, forasmuch as election ought to be free, no man, by force of arms, nor by malice or menacing, should disturb any to make free election." The liberty which so commendably protects from menace the vote of an elector in the reign of Edward is surely not shocked if invoked to protect from menace the vote of a senator in the reign of Charles. If electors are obstructed from going to a poll, an election is vitiated; if senators are obstructed from going to a senate, of which their votes

* Clarendon, B. IV. p. 140.

influence the decision, is it not, at least, a fair inquiry whether votes taken in their constrained absence are valid? Mr. Forster argues that the complaint of the Bishops was exaggerated. The Archbishop of York's gown was torn, but not, as Clarendon asserts, "torn off his back." This point is not for us to determine, it was one for the Lords at that time judicially to examine; it was for them to decide, 1st, whether the Bishops really were so molested by the multitude as to justify their complaint of constrained absence; 2ndly, whether, if so, they should be protected; and in what manner; 3rdly, whether there was any reason or precedent for their plea that the votes taken in their absence were invalid. But to our mind nothing can excuse the monstrous iniquity by which the Commons actually impeached the Bishops for high-treason, sequestrated and imprisoned them, at the very moment when the Members of the Commons themselves were setting aside the Constitution, in order to guard their own persons, not from violence experienced, but from conspiracies rumoured. In their unscrupulous march towards the pure and simple despotism of an irresponsible tribunal, Pym and his party had shown as little respect for the rights of the subject as for the authority of the Crown. They not only sent to the Tower their own fellow Members for any expressions in the warmth of debate which offended their notions, but on evidence so frivolous that it might provoke a smile at the credulity that received it, and on the allegation of offences wholly foreign to their jurisdiction, without trial or hearing, they hurried the "delinquent" to prison; they invented, under the name of delinquent, a crime hitherto unknown to English law. Did an elector ven-

ture to speak without due admiration of the popular representatives, he was a "delinquent." They sent to prison petitioners in behalf of the Constitution, they encouraged the riotous mob which clamoured for its overthrow. When the Peers voted a Declaration against disorderly tumults, the Lower House refused to concur in the Declaration. "'God forbid!" says Mr. Pym, when he was asked to exert his influence to discountenance these tumultuous assemblages, "that the people should be hindered from obtaining their just desires!" And when the sheriffs and justices appoint constables with watchers to protect the members assaulted on their way to either House, the Commons vote their orders a breach of privilege, and send one of the justices to prison. In their violent intimidation of opponents, in their encouragement to the licence of the populace, Pym and his partisans strike at freedom on the one hand and provoke anarchy on the other. The King thus sees that all his concessions have been in vain; in vain equally to bring respect to his throne, or tranquillity to that social order with the care of which, as chief magistrate, he is charged. The Commons have arrogated powers unknown to the law, incompatible with any form of government recognised by the constitution; they have said to the King, in their instructions to their Committee in Scotland, "If you do not choose to obey us, we will do without you, levy our armies, and appoint their leaders." They have said to the House of Lords (in the Resolution prepared by Pym, December 3, 1641), "We are the representative body of the whole kingdom; your Lordships are but particular persons: if you do not pass the laws we think necessary, then *this House* with such of the Peers as are more sensible

of the safety of the kingdom may join together and represent the same to his Majesty." In other words, the majority of the Commons can set aside any majority of the Peers. They have pronounced the declarations of the King illegal, and made their own imperative. They have the Tower for those who speak too warmly in defence of their Sovereign; they accord immunity and praise to his most envenomed aspersers; they refuse to put down the rebellion in Ireland, unless the Crown shall strip itself of those functions without which monarchy itself is a useless pageant; and they ascribe to their Sovereign the massacres he implores them to punish. At the time he has appeased the troubles in Scotland by lavish surrender of hereditary prerogatives, and re-enters London amidst demonstrations of joy, he is met by the Grand Remonstrance, and, without provocation on his part, returning loyalty is corrupted into fresh disaffection. It would not be in human nature if Charles had not felt resentment. Nor could any suppositions more naturally present themselves to his mind than that these ringleaders had perverted the judgment of the people; and that some show of spirit might be effective where all conciliation had so signally failed. He had with him a powerful party in both Houses; that party must melt away if its members were to be intimidated with impunity, its opponents encouraged by licence. In this temper of mind he would pause naturally to ask if those whom the courtiers round him must have regarded as traitors had not laid themselves fairly open to the penalties of treason. Such suggestions, heated by the vehement counsels of his haughty consort, shaped themselves into action, and Charles unhappily resolved to change the patient dignity of a

defensive position for the critical experiment of an aggressive policy. He fell into the snare which the framers of the Grand Remonstrance had laid for him. They had calculated that a measure so insultingly hostile would provoke the hasty temper of Charles into some outbreak which might be cited in vindication of the course that had called it forth; his moderate request that the Remonstrance should not be published till his answer was given furnished an additional reason for the publication; the defiance of his request would sting him into imprudence. Meanwhile the popular disorders which the Remonstrance excited, and its framers encouraged, could scarcely fail to rouse some action of sovereignty that would be doubtless obnoxious and probably feeble. Their most sanguine expectations were realised by Charles when he suddenly sent his Attorney-General to the House of Lords to enter an accusation against one of their order — Lord Kimbolton, and five Commoners — Hollis, Haselrig, Hampden, Pym, and Strode; and his Serjeant-at-Arms to the House of Commons to require of the Speaker the five gentlemen, Members of that House.

The whole of this proceeding is told by Mr. Forster with a stern minuteness and a dramatic force that must render his work a standard document to every diligent student of the time. We must refer the reader to his graphic recital of the steps taken by the Commons when the message reaches them; the order of the House (which might be prudential, but which Mr. Forster might have paused to remark was full as great a breach of the Constitution as Charles himself had committed in demanding the surrender of the impeached Members) that the Members for London

should require of the chief magistrate and authorities of the City a military guard for the protection of the House;* the reply to the King, conveyed that night by Falkland, Culpeper, Stapleton, and Hotham; the scene in the Queen's apartment, when the Queen persuaded the King to go himself the next morning to the House of Commons to demand the five Members; and, suspending for the moment the demur we shall afterwards raise as to Mr. Forster's implication of Hyde and Falkland as privy and consenting to the King's rash attempt, we place before the reader Mr. Forster's account of that awful hour when Charles "went into that House of Commons where never King was (as they say) but once, King Henry the Eighth." The narrative has been often told, but never with so happy a combination of historic fidelity in detail and dramatic vivacity in description.

The House had adjourned for an hour, from twelve to one: —

"Momentous was the hour during which the House thus adjourned its sitting, for within that brief space all the King's intention was betrayed. Up to the time of the adjournment, grave as were the causes of alarm, and the grounds for ex-

* In the fragments of Pym's speech for a guard upon the Houses at Westminster, it is curious to notice his characteristic propensity to press into solemn importance the shreds and scraps of frivolous gossip, with which he could never fail to be supplied by the system of espionage that furnished him and his associates with a Star Chamber of their own. "One Mr. Buckle had said the Earl of Strafford's death must be avenged, and the House of Commons were a company of giddy-brained fellows."

pecting some act of violence, the circumstance which gave its utmost gravity to the outrage contemplated does not appear to have been in any degree suspected even remotely. But now it was that Lady Carlisle managed to convey to Pym that the King meant to put himself at the head of those Whitehall desperadoes, and in person to demand, and if necessary seize, the accused members as they sat in their places in the House of Commons. D'Ewes tells us that, 'this day at dinner,' the five Members also received a secret communication of the King's intention from the Lord Chamberlain of the Household, Lord Essex, with advice that they should absent themselves."

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"The member for Banbury was still speaking when Pym, Hampden, Hollis, Haselrig, and Strode entered and took their seats, whereupon the Speaker directed it to be entered in the Journals that they had done so.

"Communication was now made to the House of the secret intelligence received, and then followed a debate, brief and pressing, but on which hung certain issues by which the future destinies of England were probably determined. Should the accused retire, or wait the King's arrival? Pym, Hollis, and Hampden, conscious of all the danger, appear to have been for quitting the House, Haselrig and Strode for remaining; and the dissentients were still urging reasons against retreat while yet, as they argued, no positive knowledge was before them of a necessity for abrupt departure, when a new actor came suddenly on the scene. Breathless with the exertion he had made to reach the House rapidly, to which end he had even clambered over the roofs of neighbouring buildings, there appeared at the door a friend of Nathaniel Fiennes, an officer of French birth settled in England, by name Captain Hercule Langres. Fiennes left his seat, exchanged some hasty words with the unexpected visitor, and immediately passed up to Mr. Speaker's chair: upon which Lenthal rose, and abruptly told the House, now a scene of extraordinary excitement, that the King already had left Whitehall at the

head of a large company of armed men, and was approaching Westminster Hall.

"This closed debate. The motion before the House had been, That, considering there was an intention to remove five of their Members by force, to avoid all tumult let them be commanded to absent themselves: but the motion now substituted, and at once affirmed, was that the House give their Members leave to absent themselves, but enter no order for it. 'It was a question,' Haselrig afterwards said, 'if we should be gone; but the debate was shortened, and it was thought fit for us, in discretion, to withdraw. Away we went. The King immediately came in, and was in the House *before we got to the water*.' Not, however, until violence had been used. For, even then, Strode, 'crying out that he knew himself to be innocent, and that he would stay in the House though he sealed his innocency with his blood at the door,' had to be dragged bodily out by his friend Sir Walter Earle, and placed in the barge which had been hastily provided, and was in waiting at the Westminster stairs."

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"Within the House, meanwhile, but a few minutes had elapsed since the Five Members departed, and Mr. Speaker had received instruction to sit still with the mace lying before him, when a loud knock threw open the door, a rush of armed men was heard, and above it (as we learn from Sir Ralph Verney) the voice of the King commanding 'upon their lives not to come in.' The moment after, followed only by his nephew Charles, the Prince Elector Palatine, Rupert's eldest brother, he entered; but the door was not permitted to be closed behind him. Visible now at the threshold, to all, were the officers and desperadoes above named, of whom, D'Ewes proceeds, 'some had left their cloaks in the Hall, and most of them were armed with pistols and swords, and they forcibly kept the door of the House of Commons open, one Captain Hide standing next the door holding his sword upright in the scabbard:' a picture which Sir Ralph Verney, also present that day in his place, completes by adding that

'so the doors were kept open, and the Earl of Roxborough stood within the door, leaning upon it.'

"As the King entered, all the members rose and uncovered, and the King also removed his hat; and it would not have been easy, says Rushworth, to discern any of the Five Members, had they been there, among so many bare faces standing up together. But there was One face, among the Five, which Charles knew too well not to have singled out even there; and hardly had he appeared within the chamber, when it was observed that his glance and his step were turned in the direction of Pym's seat close by the bar. His intention, baffled by the absence of the popular leader, can only now be guessed at; but, Rushworth adds, 'his Majesty, not seeing Mr. Pym there, knowing him well, went up to the chair.' We all, says D'Ewes, stood up and uncovered our heads, and the Speaker stood up just before his chair. 'His Majesty, as he came up along the House, came the most part of the way uncovered, also bowing to either side of the House, and we all bowed again towards him, and so he went to the Speaker's chair on the left hand of it, coming up close by the place where I sat, between the south end of the clerk's table and me.' As he approached the chair, Lenthal stepped out to meet him; upon which 'he first spake,' says D'Ewes, saying, 'Mr. Speaker, I must for a time make bold with your chair.' And then the King stepped up to his place and stood upon the step, but sat not down in the chair. And after he had looked a great while, he spoke again."

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"'Gentlemen,' said Charles, 'I am sorry for this occasion of coming unto you. Yesterday I sent a serjeant-at-arms upon a very important occasion to apprehend some that by my command were accused of high treason; whereunto I did expect obedience, and not a message. And I must declare unto you here that, albeit no King that ever was in England shall be more careful of your privileges, to maintain them to *the uttermost* of his power, than I shall be, yet you must

know that in cases of treason no person hath a privilege. And therefore I am come to know if any of these persons that were accused are here.'

"Then he paused; and casting his eyes upon all the members in the House, said, 'I do not see any of them. I think I should know them.'

"'For I must tell you, Gentlemen,' he resumed after another pause, 'that so long as those persons that I have accused (for no slight crime, but for treason) are here, I cannot expect that this House will be in the right way that I do heartily wish it. Therefore I am come to tell you that I must have them, wheresoever I find them.'

"Then again he hesitated, stopped: and called out, 'Is Mr. Pym here?' To which nobody gave answer.

"The awkwardness and effort manifest in these pauses and interruptions, the words that again and again recur, the needless and bald repetitions, in which we seem to hear the slow and laboured utterance with which Charles covered his natural impediment of speech, impress the imagination painfully.

"All the breaks and pauses, however, were omitted in the report directed to be published; and D'Ewes, surmising that not only such omissions had been made by the King's order, but also all mention of the reply given upon Charles's appeal to the Speaker, is careful to restore what was wanting. 'But the King caused all that to be left out, namely, when he asked for Mr. Pym, whether he were present or not, and when there followed a general silence, that nobody would answer him. He then asked for Mr. Hollis whether he were present, and, when nobody answered him, he pressed the Speaker to tell him, who, kneeling down, did very wisely desire his Majesty to pardon him, saying that he could neither see nor speak but by command of the House: to which the King answered, 'Well, well! 'tis no matter. I think my eyes are as good as another's.' And then he looked round about the House a pretty while, to see if he could espie any

of them.' Very welcome are all such additional touches to a picture so memorable.

"'May it please your Majesty,' said Lenthal, to the appeal that he should say where Pym was (for, as Rushworth himself, when he published his *Collections*, inserted his own report of the discreet speech of Mr. Speaker, and as the good Sir Simonds, had he lived to see it, would certainly have copied it in his Journal, it will here be most properly appended to an account which first gives to it all its significance), 'I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place, but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am here; and I humbly beg your Majesty's pardon that I cannot give any other answer than this to what your Majesty is pleased to demand of me.' Words conceived indeed with a singular prudence. Impressed deeply by the attitude of the House, and inspired suddenly by the trust confided to him, a man little famous for magnanimity or courage displayed both for the moment in a remarkable degree, and rose to the occasion as greatly as the King sank beneath it. But sorrow and suffering are wiser teachers than anger and revenge. There was yet to come a day in Charles's life, when he too would rise to the demand of the time; when his natural infirmities would be visible no longer; and when men should wonder to behold, in one so infirm of purpose and difficult of speech, both unembarrassed accents and a resolute will.

"After that long pause described by D'Ewes, — the dreadful silence, as one Member called it, — Charles spoke again to the crowd of mute and sullen faces. The complete failure of his scheme was now accomplished, and all its possible consequences, all the suspicions and retaliations to which it had laid him open, appear to have rushed upon his mind. 'Well, since I see all my birds are flown, I do expect from you that you will send them unto me as soon as they return hither. But, I assure you, on the word of a King, I never did intend any force, but shall proceed against them in *legal* and fair way, for I never meant any other. And now,

since I see I cannot do what I came for, I think this no unfit occasion to repeat what I have said formerly, that whatsoever I have done in favour, and to the good, of my subjects, I do mean to maintain it. I will trouble you no more, but tell you I do expect, as soon as they come to the House, you will send them to me; otherwise I must take my own course to find them.'"

* * * * *

"But he did not leave, as he had entered, in silence. Low mutterings of fierce discontent broke out as he passed along, and 'many members cried out aloud, so as he might hear them, *Privilege! Privilege!*' With those words, ominous of ill, ringing in his ear, he repassed to his palace through the lane, again formed, of his armed adherents, and amid audible shouts of as evil augury from desperadoes disappointed of their prey. Eagerly in that lobby had the word been waited for, which must have been the prelude to a terrible scene. Lady Carlisle alone had prevented it."

Few readers will fail to be impressed by the skilled and disciplined power with which these passages are composed; the scene moves, the actors live.

We must now pause to notice two controversial points which have been urged by Mr. Forster with great vigour of diction and ingenuity of reasoning.

That in the mode of procedure against the Five Members Charles committed an outrage on the privileges of Parliament, and inflicted a violent shock upon pubic opinion, is a fact on which his warmest defenders must agree with his sternest accusers.

The first question that arises is one which was hotly debated at the time, and which Mr. Forster examines with great care — Did Charles intend to employ the armed men that accompanied him for the purpose of carrying off the accused Members by force,

and at the risk of bloodshed? The King always asserted in his speeches and manifestoes that such was not his intention, that he came accompanied with even less than his ordinary guard. Against this statement Mr. Forster accumulates much presumptive evidence. But we still think the matter one that must remain in doubt. Even allowing the utmost force ascribed to the train that followed the King, it did not exceed 500 men; and supposing most of them were armed with pistols as well as the small swords usually worn at the time ("little swords" Clarendon calls them,) such a force would have been very insufficient to have borne away, after a probable resistance, five popular idols through a fierce multitude habituated to assemble, and disregardful alike of the claims of prerogative and the forms of law. But out of this number only about four score, besides some of his pensioners, according to the authority on whom Mr. Forster most relies, entered the lobby of the House. The King commanded them not on their lives to enter in, and the only person who followed himself into the body of the House was his nephew, the Elector Palatine.

Had he then found the Members; had the scene which Mr. Forster assumes to have been anticipated by Charles actually ensued; had the accused refused to yield themselves to his summons; had the majority of their fellow Members gathered round them to defend; had the guard been summoned in to seize the persons the King selected; had an armed conflict been waged on the narrow floors of the House — Charles himself would probably have been the first man slain in the affray.

We think it most likely that Charles had matured

no comprehensive design; that with the sanguine temper which was habitual to him, and which is rarely accompanied with foresight, he trusted to the imposing effect that his train would produce on the way — to the awe that his own presence in the hall would inspire; believed that he should succeed, and did not carry his thoughts beyond that belief. In our common experience of life we see daily that the greatest hazards are incurred with the least calculation. It is only the man endowed largely with that "wisdom of business" — in which Charles was so lamentably deficient — who, in braving a perilous risk to which his impulse invites him, solves beforehand the problem contained in the question, "And if I succeed, what then?" Nor can we imagine that, if Charles had found the Members in their places, carried them off without armed collision, and actually lodged them in the Tower, the consequences would have been so fatal to freedom as Mr. Forster assumes. With the pitiful force at his command, Charles could no more have detained prisoners so illegally made than he could have saved Strafford, not less illegally condemned. With both Houses of Parliament against him; with the City, on whose loyalty he had so vainly built, in close league with the Commons; with the exasperated multitudes that had already infested the purlieus of his Court ripe for a revolt which would be rendered irresistible because strengthened by the sympathy of the middle class and sure of leaders from the upper, Charles could not have kept the Members in durance forty-eight hours. He had decided on a course in which success every way was impossible — a course from which Falkland and Culpeper, whom he had just

called into office, must, if consulted, have been the most strenuous in dissuasion: Falkland from that respect to the usages of Parliament which Clarendon emphatically ascribes to him; Culpeper from the quick sense which he concentered on the salient points of a debated case, and the military bluntness with which he was accustomed to speak out his rude free mind. In fact, the course taken by the King can only be accounted for by a profound study of his peculiar character, in which the predominance of hope made a large and dangerous attribute. It was this sanguine temperament that led him into his most notable miscalculations, and it was the more mischievous because accompanied by a persuasion of the efficacy of his own personal interposition, which had in it less of the arrogance of pride than the delusion of self-esteem. In contrast to Charles II., who, despite a harsh and homely visage, fascinated, where he so pleased, by the charm of manner, — Charles I., with a person and countenance that seen in the canvas of Vandyke command our admiring interest, failed to conciliate or impose on those whom he addressed. Mr. Hallam has remarked that "he had, in truth, none who loved him till his misfortunes softened his temper and excited sympathy." An ungracious and chilling manner, an imperfection of speech, a something about the living man which the painter has not transferred to the portrait, seem to have made him singularly unsuccessful wherever he relied on the effect of his presence. But of this he was insensible. His personal interposition ensured the destruction of Strafford, but he went out of his way to volunteer it. No less sanguinely he *counted on* his personal interposition in the hall of

the Commons. A man who habitually hopes, and grounds his hope on something inherent in himself, can seldom be wise in design, or fortunate in execution. A certain defiance of hope is necessary to the foresight which measures obstacles, and the precautions that ensure success. Charles believed that the City was with him, that the people were really with him, if certain deceivers of the people could be removed; just as he believed, when he set up his standard at Nottingham, that England would flock round it; that if he appeared before Hull, Hull would yield: thus he forgot the disasters of Naseby in the festivities of Ragland, and placed hope in those sure instruments of ruin — avowed understanding with English Papists, secret compact with Irish rebels; thus at a still more forlorn crisis of his fate he wrote to Digby, "that he did not despair of engaging either the Presbyterians or the Independents to join him for the extermination of each other; and then (said the sanguine dreamer, duped by the hope of duping a St. John and a Cromwell) "I shall really be King again;" thus, when guarded by Leven's sentinels in the Scottish camp, his answer to the Parliamentary propositions conveyed to him by Pembroke and Suffolk was a demand to be received in London to treat in person with his Parliament: confident, even then, in the effect of that Royal presence which had failed to restrain the conflicting jealousies of his own Oxford Council; and thus, not a month before he was borne from his palace to the judicial slaughter-house of Westminster-Hall, he said gaily, "I have yet three games to play, the least of which gives me hope of regaining all." It is credulity that misleads multitudes, and it is credulity that blinds rulers.

For the rash designs of a man of this temper, a very little encouragement from those who flatter his own hopes will suffice. We do not then agree with Mr. Forster that the King's attempt on the Members was part of a long-premeditated and deep-laid scheme for restoring arbitrary rule, though, no doubt, that idea seduced the fiery temper and shallow mind of Henrietta; and still less can we subscribe to the arguments by which Mr. Forster seeks to implicate Hyde and Falkland as accessories or confidants in the impeachment of the Members or the attempts to arrest them.

We do not attach the weight Mr. Forster appears to do, to the fact that Clarendon, as well as Falkland and Culpeper, believed the accused to be really guilty of the treason alleged. Does Mr. Forster himself believe they were innocent? There can be no doubt that these gentlemen had been the principal movers and promoters in the levying an armed force without the King's authority and in defiance of it. We apprehend that there are many not illiberal politicians of our day who entertain little doubt that such an act amounts to what the ancient laws of the realm declare to be high treason. Certain at least it is that the Commons had much less ground for impeaching the twelve Bishops for high treason, because they protested against acts passed and votes taken in their constrained absence, than a lawyer, of Whig principles, could find in the accusations against the five Members, if judged only by their avowed acts and public speeches. We see, therefore, no ground for supposing that, because Clarendon, Falkland, and Culpeper thought the Members guilty, Clarendon commits a deliberate falsehood

when he says that none of the three were privy to those proceedings against the members, which he condemns as impolitic, and laments as calamitous. Every day a lawyer gives his opinion that there is strong evidence in favour of a certain action, and adds his advice that, nevertheless, there are still stronger reasons why the action should not be brought. Clarendon is the author of the various Royal declarations in which the King is made to regret and apologise for the attempted arrest; and it is inconsistent with that pride of intellect which is Clarendon's characteristic, not only to state, in a history designed for posterity, that an act of which he was secretly previsèd was a disastrous error, but to place in the King's mouth expressions of regret for an act of which he himself was accomplice. There is still less cause, we think, to impute to Falkland and Culpeper connivance with or privity to the King's mistakes in the whole of this proceeding. They were both men of great personal and Parliamentary courage, and it does not seem credible that they, who as members of the King's Government were bound to defend his acts when consulted therein, should have remained silent on his behalf if they had been consulted; that Falkland should even have assented to be member and mouthpiece of the commissioners deputed by the House to represent to the King its sense of the outrage committed on its privileges. We therefore come to the conclusion that Clarendon's statement is correct in the main, and that Charles had no English adviser of political eminence in the proceedings against the accused members except the wayward and wrong-headed Digby.

In a very few sentences Clarendon seems to lay

before us the exact faults of character by which Digby would give the counsel and Charles adopt it.

"He (Lord Digby) was equal to a very good part in the greatest affair, but the unfittest man alive to conduct it, having an ambition and vanity superior to all his other parts, and a confidence peculiar to himself, which sometimes intoxicated, and transported, and exposed him..... His fatal infirmity is, that he often thinks difficult things very easy, and doth not consider possible consequences.

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"The King himself was the unfittest person alive to be served by such a counsellor, being too easily inclined to sudden enterprises, and as easily amazed when they were entered upon."

Mr. Forster has laid great stress upon the instructions sent through Sir Edward Nicholas to the Lord Mayor, the night previous to the King's descent on the House of Commons, and has brought into much fuller display than preceding historians have done the consultations and preparations of that eventful night. But it does not appear to us that these preparations to guard against street tumults suffice to prove that even Sir Edward Nicholas was in the King's secret as to the intended arrest of the five Members. Nor can Charles justly be said to have exceeded the powers lodged with every Executive in his orders to disperse any mob by which the safety of the metropolis might be endangered; while Mr. Forster has omitted to state that the Commons had violated the Constitution, in not only setting aside Charles's authority over the Tower, but in sending to Lord Newport to desire him to take the custody *of* that stronghold.

Baffled alike in his visit to the House of Commons and his appeal to the Common Council of the City, humiliated by the angry shouts of the populace, the King retires from Whitehall to Hampton Court, and thence to Windsor.

One fact the failure of the King's attempt must have made evident to every calm-judging politician. The popular leaders had nothing further to fear from Charles so long as they did not expose their trustiest ramparts, in the privileges of Parliament and the favour of public opinion, to the hazards of Civil War. Charles had concentered and exhausted in this attempt at aggression all the resources at his command: the awe of his presence, the influence he could sway in the City, the garrison he could control at the Tower. But the whole force he could muster in the heart of his metropolis was a handful of roystering volunteers, ill armed and worse disciplined. The City repelled him. The Tower failed him. His best friends shrank from his side in consternation. The House of Lords declared against him as firmly as the House of Commons. Even the signal audacity of the eloquent Digby was paralysed, and he had not a word to say in excuse for the action he had prompted. Thus the effort to regain authority by force had only served to make convincingly clear the weakness to which Royalty had become reduced when it moved in opposition to Law.

This was then the time in which a genuine statesman would have clearly seen that liberty could only be endangered if it descended from the vantage ground won in public opinion. The King was powerless against the law so long as peace could be preserved.

he could not summon war to his aid so long as he could proclaim to the world no cause that adherents would fight for. He could no more have raised an army than he could have appeased a mob by the cry of "The Old Prerogative — Ship Money and Star Chamber!" The swords of his lealest peers would not have flashed from their scabbards — at least in his defence — had he renewed an attempt on the privileges of either House of Parliament. But if the Opposition abused the advantage they had gained in his recent defeat — if they made demands so extravagant that all who valued monarchy as an institution would approve the monarch who refused to concede them — then the whole question at issue would be at once changed; — then a war-cry more alarming than that of the "Old Prerogative" would be furnished to Charles. The loyalty estranged from the man would be restored to the institution of which he was the guardian; and patriots who loved freedom and had helped to win it might fairly prefer the cause of a monarchy limited by the reforms already achieved, to innovations at variance with the framework of the constitution, and the galling despotism of intolerant faction.

For these reasons we think the course adopted by the popular leaders after the failure of the King's attempt on the Five Members was precisely the reverse of that which was calculated to ensure to freedom and the nation the greatest certainty of good with the slightest hazard of evil.

At a time when their interest was so especially peace, every step they took was in the direction of war, and every demand they made shifted the issues *at stake till* the question became — not "what shall

be the securities against a feeble King?" but "what shall be the safeguards for monarchy itself against the licentious republic of a Marten or the fanatical Utopia of a Vane?" Pym was at that moment pre-eminently the master of the position. He was at the height of unsurpassed popularity both with Parliament and the public. His influence extended from the minds that he commanded to those that he opposed, because in marching towards the objects of the one he had professed a certain degree of sympathy with the predilections of the other. Heading avowed Puritans and suspected levellers, he had hitherto retained the special character of a sincere, if moderate, churchman — a loyal, if dauntless, subject. He had but to recognise the prudence of magnanimity — to prove consistent to the character by which he had sought to distinguish his political ethics from those of the Root-and-branch men — in order to have consolidated the new Constitution in that form in which it now stands before us, saved alike from the pikemen of Cromwell and the Cabal of Charles II. Never had English citizen so grand an opportunity to achieve the renown which posterity accords to the man who guards order from shock, and liberty from reaction. He cast that opportunity from him. What he gained in exchange we trust to make clear before we end.

In vain are all the unhappy King's attempts to retract, apologise, and atone for his mistake — in vain he assents to the Bill by which Bishops are excluded from the House of Lords — in vain he offers to compromise his essential prerogative on the control over the Militia, agrees to nominate the persons recommended to him as lieutenants by commissions revocable

at this pleasure, or make them irremoveable for a year, provided they receive their orders from himself and the two Houses jointly — in vain Lord Bristol, whose high-spirited resistance to arbitrary rule had been so memorably evinced during the time when Charles was armed with the powers now wrenched from his grasp, endeavours to save the last remnants of monarchical government, and avert the horrors of fratricidal carnage. His motion to appoint "a Select Committee of both Houses, truly to state all the differences between the King and Parliament, with the most probable ways of reconciling them, — what the King ought to do to satisfy the people, and what security he should give," — is met that day or the next by a vote of the Commons to the "effect that the King intended to make war against the Parliament; that whenever he did, it would be a breach of the trust reposed in him by his people; that whoever should serve and assist him in such wars would be a traitor by the fundamental laws of the kingdom;" and ten days afterwards (the 2nd of June) they send to Charles the famous Nineteen Propositions, on which "to establish a good peace, and strict union between the King and the Parliament." As these Propositions embody the political creed of the Pym party, in opposition to the constitutional patriots, of whom Falkland was the most illustrious; as to effect the substance of these Propositions the Grand Remonstrance was, in truth, put forth by its framers: so it is impossible to regard the end and aim of the Remonstrance, or accurately to discriminate between the Pym party and the associates of Hyde and Falkland, without a brief summary of these Propositions themselves.

They contain one salutary doctrine which posterity has preserved, and that doctrine Charles would have accepted as monarchy accepts it now, viz., "that the great affairs of the kingdom may not be concluded or decided by the advice of private men, or by any unknown and unsworn councillors; and that no public act concerning the affairs of the kingdom which are proper for the Privy Council may be esteemed of any validity as proceeding from the Royal authority, unless it be done by the advice and consent of the major part of the Council, attested under their hands." This, however roughly worded, contains the substance of responsible parliamentary government, and Charles's reply to it contains not less the substance of that responsible parliamentary government as now established. He says:*

"We have and do assure you that there is no man so near to us in place or affection whom we will not leave to the justice of the law, if you shall bring a particular charge and sufficient proofs against him; and we have given you (the best pledge of the effects of such a promise on our part, and the best security for the performance of their duty on theirs) a Triennial Parliament, the apprehension of whose justice will, in all probability, make them wary how they provoke it, and us wary how we choose such as by the discovery of their faults may in any degree seem to discredit our election."

And, indeed, the whole theory of the existing constitution and the due solution of the problems of ministerial government, as appointed by the Crown, but checked by and amenable to the people through their representatives, by which is now worked the machinery

* Rushworth, p. 3, vol. i. p. 725.

of the State, are advanced and enforced by Charles in his answer to the Nineteen Propositions, with as much precision as any liberal constitutional lawyer of our time could deliver them: —

"There being three kinds of government — absolute monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy — and all these having their particular conveniences and inconveniences, the experience and wisdom of your ancestors hath so moulded them out of a mixture of these as to give to this kingdom, as far as human prudence can provide, the conveniences of all three without the inconvenience of any one. . . . .

"In this kingdom the laws are jointly made by a king, by a House of Peers, and by a House of Commons chosen by the people, all having free votes and particular privileges. The government, according to these laws, is trusted to the king; power of treaties of war and peace, of making peers, of choosing officers and councillors for state, judges for law, commanders for forts and castles, giving commissions for raising men; to make war abroad, or to prevent and provide against invasions or insurrections at home; benefits of confiscation, power of pardoning, and some more of the like kind are placed in the king; and this kind of regulated monarchy, having this power to preserve that authority, without which it would be disabled to preserve the laws in their force, and the subjects in their liberties and properties, is intended to draw to him such a respect and relation from the great ones as may hinder the ills of division and faction, and such a fear and reverence from the people as may hinder tumults, violence, and licentiousness. Again, that the prince may not make use of this high and perpetual power to the hurt of those for whose good he hath it, and make use of the name of public necessity for the gain of his private favourites and followers to the detriment of his people, — the House of Commons, an excellent conserver of liberty, but never intended for any share in government, or the choosing of them

that should govern, is solely intrusted with the first propositions concerning the levies of moneys (which is the sinew as well of peace as of war), and the impeaching of those who for their own ends, though countenanced by any surreptitiously-gotten command of the king, have violated that law which he is bound, when he knows it, to protect, and to the prosecution of which they were bound to advise him, at least not to serve him in the contrary. And the Lords, being trusted with a judicatory power, are an excellent screen and bank between the prince and people to assist each against any encroachments of the other, and by joint judgment to preserve that law which ought to be the rule of every one of the three."

This is the constitution of England. It is here expressed by Hyde, in language that conveys his and Lord Falkland's manifesto of political faith in contrast to that which Pym and his party set forth in the Nineteen Propositions and heralded in the Grand Remonstrance.

What was the constitution prepared by the Nineteen Propositions taken as a whole? That the Parliament consisted not of King, Lords, and Commons, but of Lords and Commons alone. That the Parliament thus defined and shorn of its third member should in substance make the appointments under the Crown, to which was left only the mock prerogative of enforced assent; that if a vacancy in the Council occurred in the interval of Parliament, the assent of the majority of the Council should be necessary to filling up the place, the choice to be confirmed or void as Parliament, when it reassembled, might decide. That the government, education, and marriages of the King's children should be taken from his hands and given only to those whom

Parliament might approve. That the children of Papists should be educated by Protestants in the Protestant faith. That the church government and liturgy should be reformed as both Houses might advise. That the service of the militia and the command and custody of all forts and castles should be in the hands of Parliament, the King being compelled to appoint those whom Parliament should name. That no peer, made hereafter, should sit in Parliament but with the consent of both Houses. This, with the reserved addition of a law to deprive the Crown altogether of its right of veto, which, though not included in the Nineteen Propositions, was sure to be tacked to them if they were conceded, since its principle had been already affirmed by a majority of the Commons — this was the constitution proposed by the Pym party; for the sake of this constitution they refused all compromise, and exposed to the issue of battle all the reforms hitherto effected in conjunction with Hyde and Falkland; and, when Mr. Forster would represent the Pym party as having secured to us by their firmness or pertinacity the blessings we now enjoy, we answer that this is the constitution which perished with the men who conceived it; while that which Hyde describes and for which Falkland fell survives in all the vigour which Pym could have given to it without bloodshed — had not Pym made himself the pioneer to Cromwell.

We here pause, for a moment, to glance at the view of Lord Falkland's character and choice of action, with which Mr. Forster has enriched the last edition of his work on the Grand Remonstrance. It would be surprising, indeed, if a writer like Mr. Forster, whose tastes had been evinced in criticisms admirable for

delicate appreciation of beauty, and whose sympathies of man and of scholar are too large and too genial to be cramped within the parish-bounds of Party — did not bow to the charm with which the image of Falkland fascinates every purer eye. In that conflict of giants, each passion, each interest, finds its representative and type. Honour and Genius elect Falkland as their own. With warmth noble in an adversary, and in diction worthy of a critic, Mr. Forster renders eloquent justice to "those prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, that flowing and obliging humanity and goodness to mankind, that primitive simplicity and integrity of life." .... But Mr. Forster, while thus just to Falkland's character, appears to us wholly to misconceive those motives of conduct which were not only consistent with, but inherently elemental to, the character itself.

Mr. Forster says, "He (Falkland) is generally assumed to have been the incarnation of moderate and temperate counsels — that he is the man of all others of our civil conflict who is most generally supposed to have represented therein the monarchical principle.... But the real truth is that Falkland was far more of an apostate than Strafford, for his heart was really with the Parliament from the first, which Strafford's never was, and never to the end did he sincerely embrace the cause with which his gallant and mournful death has eternally connected him." These assumptions are not merely inconsistent with, but directly antagonistic to, that pervading attribute of Falkland's character, which Mr. Forster in a subsequent passage states with emphatic candour, viz., "that so severely did he adore

truth that he could as easily have given himself to steal as to dissemble." We think that Mr. Forster in the judgment he pronounces confounds two things essentially different, and ascribes to want of sympathy with a cause, that rectitude of judgment which has no sympathy with supporters by whose intemperance the cause is injured. That which pre-eminently distinguished Falkland amongst the actors of his time was his passion for justice. He was thus naturally the champion of the weak; he could not endure the sight of oppression. And by a consistency of character which bears down all the petty inconsistencies in detail from which no man of ardent temperament is free, the same tendencies that made him oppose Charles when powerful and oppressive — attracted him to Charles when feeble and oppressed.

Falkland, no doubt, from the first to the last, was a lover of Liberty; but of Liberty as her image would present itself to the mind of a scholar and the heart of a gentleman. It is no proof of apostacy from the cause of Liberty if he thought that a time had come when Liberty was safer on the whole with King Charles than with "King Pym."

Though he had taken an active part in the attainder of Strafford, it is probable that the circumstances connected with the execution of that formidable minister produced on his mind the same reaction which Mr. Forster has observed it had produced in a large section of the public, "when the King, to all appearances, was now the weaker party, and the popular leaders became conscious of daily defection from their ranks." When Falkland looked back to the trial and fall of Strafford, he, "who denounced ever with vehement indignation

the liberty of opening private letters upon suspicion that they might contain matter of dangerous consequence," must have felt morally shocked that it was by the purloining of a paper still more sacred than a private letter, and by Pym's adroit management of Vane's deliberate breach of honour, that Strafford had been cheated to the block.

Falkland abhorred the employment of spies: "he could account no single preservation to be worth so general a wound and corruption of human society as the cherishing such persons would carry with it." But Pym's policy was one webwork of espionage from the Countess of Carlisle to the tailor walking in the field. Even Hampden must have lost the confidence of Falkland when he accepted the commission to be a spy upon his King. Thus, in the man's nature, the same instincts that roused him against the Star Chamber of Charles would estrange him from the councils of Pym.

And his instincts were in strict accordance with all we can fairly assume as his political creed. Every Reformer with a mind so cultured as Falkland's places before him some definite goal beyond which he declines to be hurried away. The objects Falkland desired to attain were Monarchy divested of all pretensions to absolutism, and a Church purified from all sympathies with papacy and excluded from all penal jurisdiction in civil affairs: in fine, a Monarchy without a Strafford, and a Church without a Laud. These objects attained, Falkland's goal was reached — he stopped; Pym went on. It is not apostacy to stop at a good attained, because associates that had helped to attain it advance towards the risks in which the good may be lost. When, after carrying his Reform Bill with the aid of Mr. Hume,

Lord Grey refused to proceed to other Reform Bills to which Mr. Hume invited him, was Lord Grey an apostate? Or, if Pym had survived to gaze aghast on the Revolution he had headed rushing on to extravagances which Falkland's more provident reason foresaw, would Pym have been an apostate if he too had stopped short, and clung to whatever was left of the constitution of England, rather than march with Sidney towards a Republic, half Platonic, half Pythagorean, or inaugurate with Harrison a government for the Millennium under the reign of Saints?

Falkland, it is true, had no personal enthusiasm for Charles; he had, it is true, no sympathy with the Digbys and the Jermyns; he had nothing more in common with the Ultra-Royalists than Pym would have had with the Fifth-Monarchy Men.

But we have not the smallest doubt that — with "all his doubts and self-questionings," all his apprehensions of evil whichever side might prevail for a time, — his conviction of the enduring superiority of the abstract principle which obtained his preference was sincere and profound, and that amidst his prophetic sorrow he never repented the choice he had made. Falkland's claim to wisdom is indeed the greater if, unblinded to the faults of the perishable monarch, he entwined his name with all that has since adorned and embellished freedom under that constitutional monarchy for which Pym would have substituted the "Nineteen Propositions." Moderation has its creed as well as fanaticism, and there are moments when it may equally need its martyrs. With all his gifts, Falkland, doubtless, wanted that which is often mistaken for conviction, viz., *that mysterious* faculty of will which, less the attribute

of conviction than of imperious egotism, forces a kind of tyranny upon others, and so often gives to the men of action authority over the men of thought. In our intercourse with life we constantly see some man to whom we concede no special honesty, no paramount intellect, no superior knowledge, but who establishes a moral despotism in the circles in which he moves. This faculty is distinct from the mere power of intellect, with which it may or may not be combined. Napoleon I. had it — so had George III. With this gift Pym was unquestionably endowed to a sovereign degree. By it he stamped, as it were, the likeness of his own mind upon the Parliament and upon the public; by it he consolidated into singleness of action a party in itself heterogeneous and discordant; subjugating to his lead a Vane and a Hampden, as well as a Haselrig and a Strode; so that while he lived there was no law in England so potent as the will of Pym.

On the other hand, this gift wholly failed to the finer intellect of Falkland. He could not exercise control even over Hyde, who revered his virtues with so admiring a love; he could not mould to his counsels even Charles, to whose cause his accession gave the dignity of patriotism and offered a guarantee for justice. And unhappily Charles was one with whom advice had weight in proportion as singleness of will overbore his own vacillation of purpose. It was idle to argue with him, for no casuist in his realm could argue more subtly than himself; but something of that timidity often noticeable in men otherwise obstinate, who are by constitution both irritable and shy, made him more ductile to the confidant, who said roughly, "Do," than to the adviser who roused his talent for controversy,

and gave him an excuse for his characteristic and often conscientious irresolution, in placing before his hopes and his fears the various reasons why a thing should be done. It was thus that he had been controlled by councillors immeasurably inferior to himself in understanding: Laud, whose heated decisiveness was proportional to the narrowness of his scope, as a flame warms with but little fuel, if it burns up through contracted flues; Buckingham, in whose half-insolent, half-familiar domineering, the rich vitality of animal spirits gave force of character to levity of mind. And if the night before the attempted arrest of the Five Members Charles had summoned a council of all the sages in his kingdom, he would have found plausible replies to their dissuasive reasonings, though he had not a word to say to Henrietta's absolute command, "*Allez, poltron*, and pull out those rogues by the ears."

Unquestionably, therefore, Falkland had to undergo severe disappointments, bitter mortifications, from the hour he entered the King's service to the day of his death. In the council at Oxford his advice, which would have saved Charles, was constantly overruled by advisers who lured Charles on to destruction. A man less sincere in his conviction that his choice, nevertheless, was right — a man more swayed by vanity or self-interest — would have resigned in disgust a post in which he was condemned to incur many responsibilities for decisions which he had opposed in vain. Chafed by similar mortifications the Earls of Bedford, Holland, and Clare, though they fought with the King at Newbury, abandoned his cause and returned to Parliament, expressing their repentance for an interval of *loyalty* which had been so ungraciously welcomed.

The fear of similar mortifications retained from the King's council-board the prudent Northumberland, and chilled back the secret inclinations of the popular Essex.

But Falkland had attached himself to a principle, and not to a man — to a principle that — inseparably interwoven with the woof not only of our civil laws, but of our social habits — could not fail, at last, to reconcile royalty and freedom. And when sadly persuaded that he could, in his own generation, serve that cause no longer by his life, he rendered to it what, under such circumstances, is the noblest and most lasting service man can render to the cause he adopts — the example of a glorious death. The principle itself with which it is truly said "his death eternally connected him," has survived to vindicate the farsighted sagacity of his choice; travelling on through the storms which obscured it in those days to illumine the atmosphere we breathe in our own, as light, though it pass through the winds, is not moved from its course by their rage.

The conclusions which we draw from our survey of Lord Falkland's character and conduct appear to us to bring into clearer light the one great mistake which pervaded the politics of the Pym party, and still more or less distorts the judgment of their historical panegyrists. The mistake we mean is this; Pym and his more peculiar associates professed devoted attachment to the abstract principle of monarchy; yet they so contrived their opposition to the one monarch they distrusted, as to destroy the rights and safeguards indispensable to the permanent conservation of the principle of monarchy itself. If they were sincere in their attach-

ment to monarchy, but persuaded that constitutional freedom was rendered hopelessly unsafe by the duplicity of Charles, or the rashness of his advisers, then it would surely have been well to concentrate their policy on a change of King rather than on a system of securities which altered the whole framework of government, debased the Crown into the mockery of "a gilded sign," and corrupted the virtue of the representative body by enriching the greed of faction with all the patronage that belongs to an executive. A change of King instead of a complete reversal of the relations between King and people, incompatible with prolonged existence of monarchy, would have been comparatively easy, since few persons had interest in keeping Charles on his throne, while all reasonable men had an interest in preferring English monarchy, with the checks already imposed on it, to the uncemented composite of a Dutch aristocracy and a Venetian Doge. For a change of King there was a precedent in the case of Richard II.; that precedent was afterwards applied to the case of James II. Such a solution of difficulties was not ignored in the mind of Pym's contemporaries: for the Elector Palatine hoped, if he did not actually intrigue, for the throne which Charles's deposition would vacate; and Charles himself, in the course of the struggle, meditated the offer of abdication in favour of his son.

We do not say that a change in the occupancy of the throne was in itself called for or expedient. On the contrary, we are firmly persuaded that a practical reconciliation between Charles and his Parliament, with all adequate securities against the restoration of arbitrary rule, would have been easily effected after *Charles's* return from Scotland, had Pym and Hampden

combined for that object with Hyde and Falkland; and we agree with Mr. Hallam that "of the various consequences which we may picture to ourselves from a pacification — (Mr. Hallam here refers to a date subsequent to the outbreak of the war, but his remark applies with far greater force to the date immediately preceding the Grand Remonstrance) — that which appears the least likely is that Charles should have re-established that arbitrary power which he had exercised in the earlier period of his reign."

We do not say, therefore, that Charles's abdication was necessary to freedom; but we do say that, of the two, a change of sovereign would have been far easier to accomplish, and far more consistent with Pym's professed attachment to monarchy, than a change which struck royalty out of the Three Component Parts of Parliament, reduced its uses to the pageantry of *les Rois Fainéants*, and armed with its power the House of Commons as its *Maire du Palais*.

In the apology for himself that he sent forth not long before his death, Pym solemnly says, "I neither directly nor indirectly ever had a thought tending to the least disobedience or disloyalty to his Majesty, whom I acknowledge my lawful King and Sovereign, and would expend my blood as soon in his service as any subject he hath."* If this were, indeed, his political creed, Pym might at least have given his aid to the counsels of that King for whom he would so cheerfully have shed his blood. But though denouncing Charles's advisers as the cause of all the evils, alleged

* Rushworth, p. 3, vol. II. p. 378: 'A Declaration and Vindication of John Pym, Esq.'

or invented, Pym refused to become Charles's constitutional adviser. Before Falkland and Culpeper accepted office, the King renewed negotiations with Pym. Mr. Forster lauds Pym for rejecting them. To us such rejection on the part of a citizen so responsible to his country seems unfair to any King, unless predetermined that that King shall be dethroned. In short, we cannot but think that the course which became Pym and the friends who recognised with him Charles as their lawful Sovereign was to accept office, as the very security against other advisers which the issues of fratricidal war were risked to effect, and to insist on the condition which Hyde and Falkland would have cordially supported, viz. that the King should henceforth do nothing without consulting the official advisers he selected.

We dismiss as a chimera, based upon no evidence, a surmise of Mr. Hallam's, that the popular leaders meant only to curb the royal authority during Charles's life, with a view of extending it afterwards to just limits in the reign of his son. Pym and Hampden were too acute reasoners not to know, that a prerogative limited in one reign could not be re-expanded in the next without a new revolution. Nor can we conceive a more dangerous and precarious state for the realm, than a suspension of the supreme authority, with a view to its restitution in a successor — a suspension that would feed all the intrigues of faction, and be fatal to the fixity that belongs to order.

These considerations open to our view another capital fault in Pym and his partisans, for the consequences of which they are justly chargeable. With *all the* sagacity and prevision ascribed to them, they

made no attempt to construct any tolerable form of government. Implacable to destroy, they were negligent beyond conception in the duty to rebuild. We should blame them far less if, like Marten, and probably the younger Vane, they had conceived the idea of a republic as the best form of government; and had then sought to lay for such a Commonwealth sound and durable foundations. But their sole notion of good government seemed to be that of an irresponsible tyranny which armed a House of Commons — dissolvable only by its own consent — with powers limitable only by its own pleasure. In estimating the practical wisdom of Pym and his party, we cannot too carefully remember that, whatever they might allege against Charles, they never contended that he had forfeited the crown by the faults laid to his charge; and therefore the true question at issue extends far beyond that so warmly discussed between his accusers and defenders, — the question being not whether an individual king has or has not by his acts or designs justly forfeited his crown, but whether the English nation should forfeit those safeguards against turbulent faction which are found in the prerogatives conceded to a constitutional monarchy? and whether the innovations demanded by Pym and his party could either have improved the conditions of such a monarchy or established a better form of government? The moment these politicians presented to the choice of their own age and to the judgment of posterity their own scheme of a Constitution for England in the Nineteen Propositions, this became the true question as between a Pym and a Falkland, "Was that scheme of a Constitution such as any sound political reasoner would prefer to the Constitution it was intended to re-

place?" We venture to say that no practical politician, whether his theory favour republican or monarchical government, can deliberately examine the Nineteen Propositions without arriving at the conclusion that a worse Constitution the Abbé de Sièyes himself could not have taken from the pigeon-holes of his bureau. It is clear that, if the Crown had, as proposed, been deprived of all control over the military forces, all choice in civil appointments, all veto in the enactment of laws, all legal existence as a third branch of the Legislature; the House of Commons, having the exclusive control of the finances, must have rapidly monopolised every attribute of executive power; and the struggle for the enjoyment of that power would have been waged between the factions in that House, not, as now, simply by the weapons of eloquence and argument, but with the command of the troops, the forts, and the prisons, which the dominant faction would have brought to bear on its opponents. The Constitution, therefore, proposed by Pym would have entailed on the nation every conceivable evil by which the animosities of faction culminate in a Reign of Terror. Nor are these deductions from the political theories advanced by Pym in the Constitution embodied in the Nineteen Propositions, unwarranted by the short-lived adoption of the theories themselves, viz. the absolute government of a House of Commons incorporating legislative functions with executive authority. To all liberty of thought and conscience it became as inimical as the despotism it overthrew: it soon lost even its own independence, "sinking (says Hallam) in its decrepitude and amidst public contempt beneath a usurper it had blindly elevated to *power*." A House of Commons, in fact, that assumes

:o command the army, must always end in giving the army command over its own destinies. The day on which Pym first took from the senseless brain of Haselrig to his own scheming intellect the question of :he militia, was the parent of that day when Cromwell's pikemen removed the "bauble." We blame, therefore, Pym and his party for the course they adopted from :he date of the Grand Remonstrance to the outbreak of :he Civil War, as one that, whether they desired, as :hey professed, only securities for Constitutional monarchy, or aimed at a Republican form of government, was equally disastrous to either object; and by which all the substantial reforms that the party of Hyde and Falkland had mainly assisted them to obtain were gravely imperilled, nay, for more than a generation and a half were practically annulled, whether by the usurpation of Cromwell or the reaction to which the Stuarts were indebted for their restoration. And though, as against Charles I., the Parliamentary side of the contest was triumphant, yet the chances to the contrary were sufficiently grave at the onset to have made every rational patriot shun the policy which necessitated an appeal to arms.

And the triumph itself, how costly, how sullied, how brief! converted into loss by its own final achievements, reuniting England to Monarchy by the execution of Charles, and to the Episcopal Church by the execution of Laud.

The warnings that posterity receives from the historical tragedy of those times, impartial philosophy may, perhaps, rather direct to the guidance of popular factions than to the correction of erring kings; for the faults of Charles were partly those of temporary and

unusual circumstance, principally those of individual character. And little more could be applied from the lessons of his fate to assist the policy of princes in relation to popular demands, than the necessity of manly and upright sincerity in all concessions made, in all promises pledged. Suspicions are bred from the atmosphere of civil discord, and the frankest openness is the best prudence of kings, when their actions are spied and their powers enfeebled.

But to popular factions the warnings are of application universal and enduring. For we apprehend that the true key to what seems to us obscure or inconsistent in the policy of Pym and his party is to be found in motives of conduct as common now as they were two hundred and twenty years ago. It is a frequent mistake with speculative historians to ascribe to political parties deep and long-laid designs, of which political parties are in substance incapable. Elaborate strategy, sagacious foresight, profound plans veiled by systematic dissimulation, can never be the characteristic of large parliamentary combinations, nor consequently of their recognised leaders, who but represent and obey the opinions and the passions that shift and vary with the variations and shifts of opponents unstable in purpose as themselves. We do not think, therefore, that Pym and his associates formed for themselves any settled design, either for the abolition of monarchy or for some wise and orderly system of government compatible with the powers they would have transferred from the monarchy to the House of Commons. They were doubtless more united, and more consciously working to defined ends, in theological doctrine than political *creed;* and becoming bolder and more determined in

these, as Episcopacy had been made generally unpopular by the error of Charles in giving to a prelate of Laud's harsh temper and impolitic judgment a jurisdiction in secular matters, they aimed, long before they openly declared their intention, at the entire overthrow of the English hierarchy and the adoption of a Presbyterian Church, with the relentless persecution of Papists. Yet even in this Pym himself was overruled by the men he led, and borne away by the passions he had raised.

As to civil forms of government, we believe the Pym party acted much as "the advanced Liberals" of our day act now — in a sort of loose concert for the advance of what seemed to them popular principle, without any definite consideration how that principle, thus advanced, could practically harmonize with the monarchy on which it encroached more and more. "Did not craving (asks South) still grow upon granting, till nothing remained to be asked on one side or given on the other but the life of the giver?" In those days there would have been the same thought which shapes itself into cant phrases in our own — "Progressive policy;" "Advances in the right direction." And, just as now there is in our House of Commons a party that professes the utmost loyalty to the throne, and is really innocent of any design to establish a republic, but is always ready to vote away the delicate props of monarchy, and increase the democratic influences which result either in republics or the military despotism by which in old states the fears of property rudely overthrow the commonwealths of dreamers; just as now there are men who would call it "Progressive policy," and "Steps in the right direction," to place

the army at the control of the House of Commons, to reduce the jurisdiction of the House of Lords to a formula, to substitute the Voluntary Principle for the Established Church, to banish from the action of the Constitution all aristocratic intermixtures; and if these were granted, would then, rather than stand still, and on the mere principle of moving somehow or somewhere, proceed step by step to measures not as yet in their contemplation, till the old Constitution was wholly gone, and a new Constitution still a "progressive step;" — so we cannot see in the policy of Pym and his partisans anything beyond the feverish movement of a popular faction, outbidding and denouncing all temperate reformers, and blindly drifting on to that vague "something more" which ruins the substance of free nations, as it does the fortune of insatiate speculators. For there is a political as well as a pecuniary covetousness, and, in one as in the other, the hazards that spring from the greed of acquisition ruin the adventurers who never know where to stop.

Could Pym have lived to see the sentinels at Cromwell's gate, would he have admired the inevitable result of "steps in the right direction"? Could he rise from his grave to-morrow, and look around at this established monarchy, with rights fenced from his demands, with a Church triumphant over the Calvinists, and tolerant alike of Papist and Puritan, would he not say — "Degenerate race! How have you profited by the Grand Remonstrance? Where is the constitution set forth in the Nineteen Propositions?"

But could Falkland look from his repose on England as England is now, would not Falkland say, "This is what I sought to make my country! This is the throne

which I would have reconciled to Parliamentary freedom; this is the Church that I would have purified from ecclesiastical domination over secular affairs and intolerant persecution of rival sects. To make an England such as I see now, I opposed the framers of the Grand Remonstrance and the Nineteen Propositions; and England as seen now is the vindication of my policy and the refutation of Pym's"?

We thus take leave of the subject which Mr. Forster's able works have brought before us; differing essentially from him in the views to which the events he commemorates have led us, but heartily commending to a perusal, qualified by the considerations herein suggested, the important additions he has made to our historical literature. His talents have adorned the cause he advocates; he must pardon us if we believe that, the fuller the light he throws on the facts and the parties which those talents illustrate, the wider will become the circle of reflective men who, in admitting their obligations to his research, will concur in our dissent from his conclusions.

THE LIFE OF SCHILLER.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

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LIFE OF SCHILLER.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST PERIOD.

Schiller's boyhood — His parentage — Early studies and inclinations — His entrance at the Military Academy — His youthful poems, and predilections for the drama.

Close by the village of Lorch, on the borders of Würtemberg, rise the ruins of a castle, the hereditary seat of the Counts of Hohenstaufen. The graves of that illustrious family surround a convent, placed upon a neighbouring eminence, and half hid by venerable limes. Upon another hill, stands an old chapel; below, flows the river Rems, through luxuriant vineyards, and fertile corn-fields. Amidst the ruins of Hohenstaufen, or amidst the graves of its ancient lords, between the years 1765-68, might often be seen two children — a boy and girl, — so strongly resembling each other, as to denote their relationship as brother and sister.* Usually they were seen alone; sometimes with young companions, — sometimes with a man in a military uniform, and in the vigour of life — to whom the boy,

* Hoffmeister, Schwab.

especially, listened with avidity, whether he explained the plan upon which the old Castle had been built, or pleased the infant spirit of adventure, by anecdotes of camp and field.* More often, perhaps, their companion was a female, of mild exterior, and manners peculiarly gentle, though somewhat grave and serious. And she, too, found in the children, still more especially in the boy, eager listeners to the talk by which she sought to instruct the understanding, or arouse the fancy. She had tales of witch and fairy to relate; — but, as the children grew older, she preferred rather to please their imagination with verses from Klopstock, Gerhard, and the pious Gellert. More than all — she at once charmed and instructed her young pupils by stories and passages from the Gospel, adapted to their understanding; and their tears flowed betimes at the sufferings of the Redeemer.** Already, perhaps, the scenes which he loved to haunt, and certainly the subjects he was accustomed to hear, had produced strong and deep impressions upon the mind and character of the boy. Already he had conceived a passion for Nature — formed habits of reverie and reflection — and looked forward to the ecclesiastic profession, for which his parents designed him, with a religious and earnest enthusiasm. At eight years old, alone in the woodlands, with a boy about his own age, he exclaimed, "O Karl, how beautiful is it here! All — all could I give, so that I might not miss this joy!"*** His very sports partook of his serious character: nothing pleased him more than, by the help

* Hoffmeister.
** Hoffmeister, Schwab.
*** Hoffmeister, Schwab.

of a cap and a black apron, to assume the attire of the priest, mount a stool, and deliver extemporaneous and fervent homilies to an audience consisting of his mother and sisters. From his earliest childhood he was ever delighted to leave his infant games, to join the prayers or Bible lectures of the pious family to which he belonged; and his favourite sister has left a pleasing description of the child at such moments — with his folded hands, his blue eyes raised to Heaven, and the fair hair clustering over the broad forehead which he inherited from his mother. But though from infancy unusually serious, and from infancy, also, impatient of restraint, his temper was sweet, and his disposition full of tenderness and compassion. If he met a poor child in his way to school, he would bestow on him all he had; even his books — his clothes were not sacred from the impulse of his compassion. With all this softness of heart — this love of solitude, and this pious temperament, there was no less manifest a resolute and determined spirit. He was peculiarly fond of reading Voyages and books of Travels; and the Histories of popular heroes, such as Alexander the Great. He would often exclaim, "I must go into the world!" His reveries were, in short, those that denote not an indolent temper, but an active mind. His musings were not merely day-dreams — they were animated by that zeal for inquiry which usually foretells, in childhood, the career of men destined to think boldly, and love truth. In his seventh year, one evening, during a storm of thunder and lightning, the boy was missed at supper; he was found at last at the top of a tall lime-tree, near the house, enjoying the tempest; and, to quote his own apology, "wishing to see where so much

fire in the heavens came from!"* — Such in childhood was the character of Johann Christoph Friedrich Schiller.

His birth placed him in that condition, between wealth and penury — (a condition bordering two classes — the Popular and the Refined), which is perhaps the most favourable to intellectual eminence.

His father, Johann Caspar Schiller, was of humble extraction, the son of a baker, who held the office of Bailiff in the village of Bittenfeld.** He was a man of an adventurous and restless character; stern and severe indeed in manners, but warmly attached to his family, of good abilities, of exemplary probity, and a strong and fervent sense of religion. He had held the rank of Surgeon in a Bavarian regiment. In 1749, a year after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, he married Elizabeth Dorothea Kodweiss, a young woman, born at Marbach (about eight miles from Stuttgart), of parentage suitable to his own; though it is said that her more distant descent could be traced to the noble house of Kottwitz.***

After his marriage, Caspar Schiller resigned the medical profession; but at the breaking out of the Seven Years' War in 1757, entered the Würtemberg army as ensign and adjutant. It was not till after some years that their union was blessed by children: Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, born 1757; Johann Christoph

* To this anecdote Schwab gives the weight of his authority.

** Schwab.

*** Kattwitz, according to Hoffmeister — corrected by *Schwab to* Kottwitz.

Friedrich, the poet, born at Marbach, Nov. 10, 1759;* Dorothea Louise, born two years afterwards; and Nannette, the youngest.**

When Friedrich Schiller was six years old, his father, then risen to the rank of captain, was sent to Lorch as recruiting officer. Here the boy received the first regular rudiments of education, including Latin, and something even of Greek, from the clergyman of the parish, Philip Moser; whose name and virtues he afterwards immortalised in 'The Robbers.' His favourite companions were, his eldest sister, and the son of his tutor, Karl Moser. But no observation is at once more true and more hackneyed than that it is to the easy lessons of a mother, men of genius have usually owed their earliest inspiration. Schiller's mother had tastes and acquirements rare in women of her rank: she was a good musician — fond of poetry, and even wrote it; and the gentleness of her temper gave a certain refinement to her manners.

Friedrich Schiller was nine years old when his father was removed by the Grand Duke to Ludwigsburg, and the boy was entered at the public school instituted at that place. The academical discipline revolted one who had already formed his own desultory modes of self-instruction, and his industry was reluctant and constrained. Still he passed his examinations with credit; was ever one of the first in the Latin class to which he belonged, and received marks of approbation in the four several examinations 1768.

* "A few months later than our own Robert Burns." — *Carlyle.*

** Two other children died soon after birth.

he underwent before the School Commissioners, at Stuttgart. His character betrayed itself rather with his playfellows than his preceptors. He obtained an ascendency over them; and his high spirit would brave those older and stronger than himself, if he suspected any intention to affront him. With his superiors he was reserved and awkward. But what, at this time, chiefly influenced his future fate, was the sight of the theatre at Ludwigsburg — the remembrance of that spectacle, which, according to the fashion of the day, seems to have been a gorgeous spectacle, half opera half melodrame, began to colour all his thoughts, and dictate the character of his sports in the hours of play.

1770. At the age of eleven, a change was noticeable in his habits; he shrank from the games in which he had been hitherto amongst the most active. In the playhours he would wander with some friend amongst the neighbouring plantations, and, in those moods of premature gloom and speculation, which so often cloud the dawn of illustrious manhood, complain of present thraldom, and form wild conjectures of future fate. Already he began to throw thought into verse — already he began to meditate the scheme of some elaborate tragedy. But his religious bias was still his

1773. strongest, and at the age of fourteen he still shared the predilections of his parents in favour of the ecclesiastical profession. But now came the first great revolution and crisis of his life.

Karl, Grand Duke of Würtemberg, a luxurious and ostentatious Prince, but one possessed of many excellent qualities, formed the notion of a great National Academy, first instituted at "Solitude," one of his country places, — afterwards transferred to Stuttgart.

This establishment was called a Military Seminary, but not confined exclusively to those intended for the military profession.

The majority of the pupils were, indeed, the sons of officers — or even privates — in the Würtemberg Army; but the sons of civilians were admitted also; and suitable instruction was given to students intended for the peaceful profession of the Law. But the school rightly deserved the distinguishing epithet of Military, from the discipline by which it was characterised.

The father of young Schiller had recently been promoted by the Grand Duke to the office of Inspector and Layer-out of the grounds at "Solitude," and was subsequently raised to the rank of Major. But these benefits were not cheaply purchased. The Grand Duke in return desired to send Friedrich Schiller to his Military Seminary. This was tantamount to the rejection of the long-cherished scheme of the clerical profession. After much painful embarrassment, the elder Schiller frankly represented to his Prince the inclinations of himself and his son. The Grand Duke, however, repeated his request, proposed to leave to Friedrich the choice of his studies at the Academy, and promised him, when completed, an appointment in the Royal Service. There was no resisting a petitioner, whose request was in reality a law, and from whose favour was derived the very bread of the family. Friedrich Schiller did not and could not hesitate to sacrifice his own wishes to the interests of his parents. But this renunciation of his young hopes and the independence of his freewill, wounded alike his heart and his pride. With grief and resentment equally keen, at the age of fourteen he entered the 1773.

Academy as a student in Jurisprudence. The studies thus selected were, in themselves, sufficiently uncongenial; but to the dulness of the Law Lecture was added the austerity of a corporal's drill. The youths were defiled in parade to lessons, in parade to meals, in parade to bed. At the word "March," they paced to breakfast — at the word "Halt," they arrested their steps — and at the word "Front," they dressed their ranks before the table.* In this miniature Sparta, the grand virtue to be instilled was subordination. Whoever has studied the character of Schiller, will allow that its leading passion was for Intellectual Liberty. Here mind and body were to be alike machines. Schiller's letters at this time to his friend Karl Moser, sufficiently show the fiery tumult and agitation of his mind; — sometimes mournful — sometimes indignant — now sarcastic, now impassioned — weary disgust and bitter indignation are seen through all. The German works, not included in the school routine, were as contraband articles — the obstacles to obtain them only increased the desire: no barrier can ever interpose between genius and its affections. The love of Man to Woman is less irresistible than the love that binds Intellect to Knowledge. Schiller stole, the more ardently because secretly, to the embraces of his mistress — Poetry. Klopstock still charmed him, but newer and truer perceptions of the elements of Poetry came to him in the 'Goetz von Berlichingen' of Goethe, with which, indeed, commenced the great Literary Revolution of Europe — by teaching to each nation that the true classical spirit for each, must be found in

* Hoffmeister, Schwab, &c.

the genius of its own Romance. He who would really imitate Homer, must, in the chronicles of his native land, find out the Heroic Age.

Schiller obeyed the impulse of his own frank and courageous mind in an attempt to regain his freedom. A strange custom at the Academy enjoined each pupil, once a year, to draw up and read aloud an analysis of his own character. Schiller seized the first opportunity thus presented to him, to state that his character was not formed to excel in jurisprudence, but to serve God as a preacher. The confession failed to amend the vocation; but finally he obtained permission to exchange Law for Medicine, — a class for which was superadded to the other academical instructions. The studies for this latter profession were no doubt more congenial to him than those of law, and served, indirectly and collaterally, to enrich the stores of a mind so inquisitive into the operations of Nature. But the discipline in all studies was the same. Had they sought to cure him of Poetry, they would have had but to drill him into being a poet! Meanwhile, he was fast fitting himself for the great destiny to which he was reserved. He devoured the writings of those who were his precursors in German literature. Wieland's translation of Shakspeare fell into his hands. Nothing more strongly marks the peculiar earnestness of his character — the emphatic distinction between Shakspeare and himself — than the effect which he tells us, in one of his own compositions, the great Englishman produced on him: — "When at a very early age I first grew acquainted with this poet, I was indignant with his coldness — indignant with the insensibility which

1774.

allowed him to jest and sport amidst the highest pathos. Led, by my knowledge with more modern poets, to seek the poet in his works; to meet and sympathise with his heart; to reflect with him over his object; it was insufferable to me that this poet gave me nothing of himself. Many years had he my entire reverence — certainly my earnest study — before I could comprehend, as it were, his individuality. I was not yet fit to comprehend Nature at first hand!" Nor indeed was Schiller ever able, as Shakspeare, thoroughly to separate himself from his creations. The peculiarities of his mind inclined him, if they did not limit, to the delineation of grave and elevated characters, and his heart, always in unison with his mind, led him to incorporate himself with the beings he invoked; bidding them be serious with his own intellect or ardent with his own emotions.

His friends were few, but they were well selected, and they shared his inclinations, if they had not his genius, for literature. They formed a sort of intellectual fraternity. Each was to compose something, for which all dreamed of publication and fame — one a romance after 'Werther;' one a pathetic drama; one a chivalrous imitation of 'Goetz von Berlichingen;' Schiller himself (fired by Gerstenberg's 'Ugolino') a tragedy, called 'The Student of Nassau.' This he abandoned afterwards for one of which he composed several scenes, and of which a part yet lives transferred to 'The Robbers,' viz., 'Cosmo de Medicis.'

Meanwhile his poetical talent found its first (and the usual) vent in the corners of a periodical Magazine. At the age of sixteen and seventeen appeared in the Suabian Magazine some small

1776-7.

poems (very judiciously omitted from the collected editions of Schiller's works), in which the imitation of Klopstock is sufficiently visible. "O, then was I still," he exclaimed later, "but the slave of Klopstock!" Nevertheless, the editor of the Magazine, Balthasar Haug, found promise in the midst of extravagance and bombast, and prophesied that the young poet "would one day do honour to his father-land."*

The more his inclinations grew confirmed, the more sensibly he became alive to the formal tyranny by which they were opposed. No youth was less likely to be corrupted by Voltaire; but bitter was his resentment at the disgrace he incurred, when discovered reading one of Voltaire's works. "O Karl," he exclaims in his correspondence with young Moser, "so long as my spirit can raise itself to be free, it shall bow to no yoke!" In fact, the Man's mind was ripened long before the Poet's genius. Crude, hard, laboured, and extravagant were Schiller's earliest efforts; but the soul from which Poetry springs as a well, clearing itself the more the farther it advances from its source; a soul ever observant of beauty; ever on the search for truth; ever brave in difficulties; ever fierce against restraint; *that* was the same in its large elements, when the Boy, in vehement bombast, declaimed against the blood-stained laurels of a conqueror, as when the Man planted the robust step of Tell on the soil of Switzerland, and drew forth from the obloquy of ages the virgin glory of the Maid of Orleans.

At last this long and terrible conflict between Genius and Circumstance became decisive. The cry of the strong man went forth. The Titan moved beneath the mountain!

* Schwab, Hoffmeister.

CHAPTER II.

Brief review of some portion of German literature immediately previous to the appearance of Schiller's 'Robbers.'

It was precisely that time in Germany, when an Author, whatever his defects, might hope for a favourable hearing, provided his genius carried onward the revolution that had already taken place in literature, and sympathised with that more dangerous movement which had begun to disturb society and agitate opinion.

In literature, the old Gallomania, which for half a century had been vigorously opposed by sincere Poets and sturdy Critics,* had become almost extinct, except in the small royal circles where 'Seigneur Oreste' and 'Madame Hermione' still maintained their ground. The German genius had already arrogated a dynasty, and found in Klopstock an altar and a throne. What Klopstock** *wrote* is comparatively unimportant; what Klopstock *did* is sublime. No matter that his 'Messiah' was overrated, — that even his Odes are more tumid with cloud than instinct with fire: Rather a verbal musician than a poet,*** his poetical imagination

* Among critics, Bodmer and Breitinger; among poets, von Haller and especially Gellert.

** Born 1724.

*** One of the greatest of the German critics has observed that Klopstock's odes, to be appreciated, should be accompanied with music — that he wrote, as it were, to tunes and airs.

is doubtless frigid, and the weakness of his thoughts in vain disguises itself in redundant epithets and syllabic pomp: But he had two other imaginations besides the poetical, — the imagination of the heart, — the imagination of the conscience. He was an enthusiast for his country and his religion. He felt like an honest man, and he wrote like a man in earnest. It has been truly observed, that, after Klopstock, "Germans were no longer ashamed to be German." If he was not absolutely the first to awaken the national spirit, he made it popular with the people, fashionable with the great, ardent in the young, solemn in the pious. There is not a German poet coming after Klopstock, who is not indebted to him; indebted to him for a German audience — for that prevalent sentiment of patriotism and devotion in the Public without which the Poet sings to lay-figures, not to men. What was begun by Klopstock, was continued, with profounder views and on a grander scale, by the illustrious Lessing.* Well does Heine** exclaim, that "Lessing was the literary Arminius, who freed the German Theatre from every foreign domination:" Nor the Theatre alone — all German Art was embraced by the vast range of his criticism and the stalwart vigour of his genius. It is impossible to overrate the excellence of Lessing's intellectual nature, and the noble tendencies of his ambition. Though he modestly denied to himself the qualities of the Poet, and though some shallow depreciators have echoed his

* Born 1729.

** 'Zur Geschichte der neuern schoenen Literatur in Deutschland.'

own assertion, he enters even into prose with the majesty none but Poets can assume. In his 'Emilia Galotti' domestic relations are elevated into the sublimest tragic passion. This drama is the German Virginius. No man has ever so happily effected the difficult union of heroic sentiment with modern manners. Greater even as a critic than a creator (and in the former character far more popularly renowned), he served both to place Art in its true sphere, and to enlarge its domain. Manliness was his characteristic in life and in tastes. Like Schiller, he loved to delineate Human Nature in its nobler qualities, and to sympathise with its graver ends, rather than, like Goethe, to dissect its infirmities, or, like Wieland, to trifle with its interests; — the 'Werther' of the first disgusted him — the 'Agathon' of the last enraged. Lessing had the nationality of Klopstock without his prejudice. If Klopstock were the first National Poet for the Public, Lessing was the great National Writer for the Writers. That a taste for German Poetry should exist, Klopstock was necessary. That Herder, Schiller, and even Goethe, should have been what they were, Lessing must have lived.

But though the influence of Lessing was so profound, it was not of a nature to be widely popular, nor to be clearly comprehended, save by its after-results: and his great career was now approaching to its close. He died in February, 1781, leaving a Public prepared for manly sentiments, for energetic purpose, for genial humanity, in those writers whom his mind had formed.

At the period we enter (about 1780-1), Wieland*

* Born 1733.

stood next to Klopstock in popular opinion. Amiable both in manners and in tastes, of mature years and established fame, if he was less decidedly national than Klopstock and Lessing, he was yet highly influential in the formation of the National Literature. He also was a *First*, an Originator — the first who taught the delicacies of Taste to German strength — the first who taught the various imitators of the Gallic or Grecian Muse how, without imitating, to appropriate — the first in whom learning seemed airy as intuitive observation; and in whom the fancy of a genuine poet, and the fluency of a charming novelist, were blended with the erudition of a scholar, and the elegance of a man who has known the world. Partly French, partly Greek — he is German through all; a German who commenced his education at Paris, and finished it at Athens. We enter not into a discussion of the precise rank Wieland should assume, — a rank too readily conceded at one time, too harshly questioned now. But his influence limited itself to the fancy and the taste — it did not extend to opinions — it did not root itself in passions. His great defect was his want of earnestness and purpose. He may charm and he may refine; but he does not brace the intellect to masculine exertion, nor elevate the imagination to lofty objects. At this time he sate on his careless throne at Weimar, rather to receive homage than to govern. But there were now already labouring into fame three young men; two of whom, at least, were destined not only to wear the robes of sovereignty, but to wield the sceptre — Herder, Goethe, and Johann Heinrich Voss.

The minds of these three men had been formed

under the most powerful influence which a Frenchman had ever yet exercised in Germany. Always prone to imitate (as a learned people necessarily must be), the Germans had escaped from the old Gallomania to fall into Grecomania and Anglomania — while one was imitating Theocritus, another was imitating Pope. The English Richardson, who, though less popular in Germany than Fielding, produced a far more profound impression, as, indeed, that greater genius must do wherever the two can penetrate,* may be seen overshadowing the large mind of Lessing himself. The sublime Clarissa, whom Dishonour so noiselessly slays, is the original of the no less sublime Emilia Galotti, who flies to Death from even a sentiment that dishonours. But in vain Klopstock and Lessing had thrown from their pedestals Racine and Corneille — in vain Wieland had given to the Germans a more kindly, if a feebler Voltaire of their own — a new Gallomania had seized the heart, and fevered the brain of

* The influence of Richardson upon the fiction and poetry of Europe was not only vast at the time, but, enduring still, it must endure for ever. In vain his language grows obsolete, in vain his minuteness has become wearisome, in vain the young race of novel-readers leave him on the shelf — to those somewhat tedious pages turns every genius who aspires to rise in fiction; from them, though with toil and study, can best be learned the art of extracting from the homeliest details the noblest pathos. In 'Clarissa' is beheld that true spirit of tragedy which first dispensed with kings and heroes and the paraphernalia of the outward stage — teaching how the compass of all grandeur in fiction can be attained by him who can describe the affection, and comprehend the virtue, of one human being.

the People: "Greek and Briton, all gave way to the influence of ROUSSEAU. Nothing is more interesting to one who seeks with Helvetius to trace the connection and sympathy between social influences and literary tastes, than to contrast the nugatory effect produced in England, with the prodigious effect produced in Germany by this unhealthy Genius. Though, at two great periods in the history of our Literature — that of Elizabeth, and that of Anne — the Italian and the French writers have influenced our own, our more illustrious authors have rather reproduced than imitated; and with the single exception of the Sterne-fever, the Literature of Sentiment has never been widely successful with our practical and busy population. But in Germany, always, as we have said, prone to imitate, no imitation was likely to be so contagious as that which combined sentiment with thought. The peculiar habits of life amongst the Germans — the absence for the most part of that active constitutional liberty which, when accompanied with commercial pursuits, always tends, overmuch perhaps, to harden and materialise the national mind — do not present to domestic life the counterpoise which the life of the Mart and the Agora effects in England. Books which dispose the mind to abstract reverie or speculation, exercise a greater influence over the Germans than they do over us; a theory appears to them the more seductive in proportion as it is detached from the experience of practical life. Either wholly contented with the existing state of things, or wholly amidst the clouds of Utopia — they want that intermediate standard to which the mass of Englishmen unconsciously refer every suggestion of change or project of reform. The

love of liberty, instinctive to all, and especially to nations at once so brave and so lettered as the German, finds that vent in the ideal from which it is precluded by the actual. Hence, while practical liberty amongst the Germans is so confined when compared with ours,* their theoretical liberty — liberty of thought, opinion, and speculation — is infinitely greater. The most religious German will start inquiries which an irreligious Englishman would be afraid to suggest: And the Politician who would shrink from arguing for a Representative Constitution, will luxuriate in the dreams of Republican Fraternity. Precisely the reasons that deadened the influence of Rousseau in England, gave it vitality in Germany, viz. impracticability in politics, and morbidity in romance. Our own active life, that rude, common sense which is acquired with our mother's milk, amidst our world-awake population, would teach even an ordinary Englishman the untruth that forms the ground-work of 'The Social Contract,' and shock our sense of nature in the eloquence of St. Preux. We know, without reasoning about it, that no Social Contract ever existed, and that no lover, worthy the name, could sit down to make an inventory of furniture five minutes before his first assignation with the woman he professes to adore. But with the Germans the novelty of the political theory concealed its falsehood; the sentiment of the fiction concealed its want of nature. There was much in Rousseau that could not fail to charm and to dazzle the German mind, which, from its own deficient experience of agitated and various life, perceived not his ignorance or perversion of nature in

* The reader will remember that this was written in 1847.

character and passion. The Germans could fully comprehend his love and his knowledge of *inanimate* nature; his enjoyment of scenery; his passion for solitude; his power of associating the landscape around with emotions within. Their own fondness for domestic and rural life made them charmed with the primitive simplicity which he held up to admiration. The vast mass of disappointed ambition, which amongst an intellectual population, without the multiform vents of a free constitution, must necessarily be engendered, found a voice and a sickly comfort in Rousseau's disgust of the active world. The ardour for liberty — the revolutionary spirit, awakened in Germany as in France — obtained in the Dreamer of Geneva a representative nearly akin to the amiable and tender character of the Germans. The biting mockery of Voltaire might delight a court and charm a scholar; but the earnest and pious heart of the multitude recoiled from a spirit that desecrated what it attacked, to open itself with dangerous emotion to a spirit that sought to sanctify what it embraced. The laughing philosopher never makes disciples so devoted as the weeping one. With Rousseau rose the great sect of HUMANITY; the school which seeks to lift human nature above convention; which would extract from social life all that is harsh and tyrannous; and (to use the phrase of Seneca) recognise a claim to kindness wherever it looks upon the face of man.

Upon Herder, Goethe, and Voss, the influence of Rousseau produced effects, perhaps equally strong, but widely differing in their nature. Herder* rejected all that in the Genevese was effeminate and egotistical, to

* Born 1744.

seize upon all that was genial and philanthropic. In him arose the true Preacher of Humanity: with Rousseau Humanity was a sentiment; with Herder it became a science. Of a mind thoroughly sound and healthy — of a cultivation vast and various — of a broad common sense which gave life and substance to the boldest speculations, Herder snatched from the weak hands of the French Socialists the great cause which they profaned — viz. the Principle of Human Progress, recognised it through History, illustrated it through Poetry, and reconciled it to Religion as the law of God. For Herder the noblest destinies were reserved. By profession a preacher — by energy a citizen — by genius a poet — by piety and wisdom a philosopher and cosmopolite — all that is intellectual in man may be said to have *flowered* in him. With a great inclination towards what is practical in life, which he sometimes regretted he had not more diligently studied in its minutiæ, he combined an innocence of heart in which lay half his strength. "My whole life," he said once, "is the interpretation of the oracles of my childhood." He loved to glean thoughts from the conjectures of childhood — from the wonder of ignorance. Hence he saw in the infancy and youth of nations the beauty and the promise which historians have overlooked. Thus he was the first who gave to Poetry its proper place in the grave and solemn dispensations of the world: — regarding it as the absolute voice that spoke the time and character of a race, he brought into one vast compendium, entitled 'The Voices of the Nations,' the popular songs of all countries. Amongst the many influences he lived to effect upon his age, is the impetus he gave to that tendency in the German genius, which

is called "Universalism." For, as Humanity to Politics, Charity to Virtue, Christianity to Man, so is Universalism to Letters.* That separation between the faculties — that division of mental labour so general elsewhere — in Germany was broken down. The Poet studied Philosophy — the Philosopher Poetry. But most of what Herder lived to effect, was as yet unfulfilled. He was already known as a scholar, an essayist, a victorious prizeman, an eloquent preacher — and in high station and repute at the Court of Weimar. But still he stood somewhat apart from the popular literature of the time; and had rather served to indicate the great change destined to take place in public taste and feeling, than to dispirit, by his own renown, the ambition of another.

While Rousseau had thus influenced Herder only to grand results; the primitive simplicity, the pastoral family life which Rousseau had held up to admiration

* Herder is a very voluminous writer, but the epitome of his mind and his views is to be found in his work on the 'Philosophy of the History of Mankind.' The work is not without grave faults. It is often incorrect in detail; it too much follows Helvetius in founding authority on the imperfect accounts of travellers and voyagers; it is often displeasingly declamatory in its tone. But its power of generalisation is astonishing. It seizes, as with the grasp of a giant, the immensity of the subjects it embraces. Few works deserve so justly the epithets of *luminous* and *comprehensive.* Readers well acquainted with this work will find many of its ideas, even some of its images, borrowed by Schiller in his later poems, though it would seem unconsciously. Schiller never appears to have been aware of his great obligations to Herder.

amongst the homely Germans, had sunk deep into the mind of a rude young Saxon — Johann Heinrich Voss,* not worthy, indeed, from his mere genius, to be named in the same breath with Herder and Goethe, but still, for many reasons, not meriting the depreciation of Schlegel, and the disdain of Menzel. Low-born, self-educated, a rigid Protestant sectarian, driven for bread to the drudgery of a schoolmaster, Voss is often vulgar in his taste, pedantic in his compositions, prejudiced and intolerant in his polemics. But withal, he is a true German, and a strong man. His services to his language were immense. He enriched it with the wealth of the foreigner; he strengthened it with the cultivation of its own national resources; he revived the old words of Luther on the lips of Homer. It is well said of Voss that his strength is in his war with obstacles. He hewed his way through poverty into learning; and he cut through rough crags** of diction, till he found out a fount of poetry all his own. But, as yet, Voss was young, — if not obscure, at least but partially known, — and had neither obtained, by harsh and ungrateful controversy, the title of the second Luther, nor given in his 'Louise' and his 'Idyls' (poems most popular in their time, and thoroughly repugnant to English taste) the pastoral of a Curate's Parlour, and the model to Goethe's 'Herman and Dorothea.' First, then, already in popular eminence, of the three we have named — first, indeed, of all the younger and rising generation, stood Wolfgang Goethe.***

* Born 1751, two years after Goethe.

** "Versified marble blocks." — *Heine.*

*** Born 1749, five years after Herder.

Nor had *he* then escaped, perhaps he never altogether escaped, from the influence of Rousseau. In fact, it is the merit of this wonderful man, that his whole nature was especially plastic and impressionable. Every influence of his time stamped itself on his intellect, to be reproduced in new forms by his genius. Does the age incline to sentiment? he sounds its abysses: — To irony? the sneer of Voltaire seems venomless beside the icy smile of the fiend he calls from hell, to mock at human knowledge, and desecrate human love! Does the age yearn for Pastorals and family life? he turns from courts and the seventh heaven of Poetry to borrow from homely Voss; and ruins him by the riches he extracts from the loan. In his 'Werther' he concentrates the history of an epoch in his country, — the epoch of the Rousseau Mania. But though the 'Nouvelle Héloïse' is incontestably the origin of 'Werther,' those* who regard it as a mere copy do it miserable injustice. There is more rhetorical eloquence in one page of the '*Nouvelle Héloïse*,' than in the whole of '*Werther*' — but there is more nature in one page of '*Werther*,' than in the whole of the '*Nouvelle Héloïse*.' In this, the warmest and most actual of all Goethe's novels — if once overrated, now so unjustly depreciated, which he did right to regret for its moral, which he did wrong to disparage as a proof of his genius — lies the germ of much that, in fiction, its author's riper intellect matured. Here we see that association of homeliness and grandeur which his enemies have called "the Adornment of Commonplace." What Englishman, with his fastidious classical taste, has not ridiculed

* Such as Menzel.

and the Unseen, the Actual and the Ideal, the stern demands of uncomprehended duty, and the desire to escape from practical action into visionary self-commune; Hamlet, in whom is shown the mysterious prototype of what man would be with virtue, and with wisdom, but without WILL!

But though Goethe does not seem to us to be blamed for following the tendency of his genius, into directions in which the peculiar delicacy and subtlety of his intellect ensured him such success; and though, a hundred years hence, we believe that what Menzel and other depreciators consider immoral, will not mislead a single imitator, or corrupt a single youth; yet it must be conceded that the *direct* object of his works was not to make Man more manly, and his desires more elevated. We say the *direct* object; for indirectly, and sooner or later, whatever makes man wiser,—nerves his mind, and purifies his emotions; and there may be truth in the theory, that Art is to be cultivated as Art; that the Beautiful must reflect indifferently on its tranquil mirror whatever Convention deems moral or immoral: For, to whatever is really and essentially vicious, the Beautiful itself is opposed; — Convention revolts at the exhibition of the naked form, but foul must be the imagination that finds immorality in the Venus of the sculptor.

At this date, however, Goethe was still scarcely out of his apprenticeship. His greatest works had not been produced. On his 'Goetz von Berlichingen,' his 'Werther,' and his 'Clavigo,' rested the principal columns of the renown he had acquired. These, indeed, had unsettled the public taste, and prepared it for bold innovations; but Goethe had not, like our Byron in a

later day, engrossed the general interest in himself, and become the sole representative of a common sentiment. In that crisis of opinion and of passion preceding the outbreak of the French Revolution, and contemporaneous with the rise of daring speculators and profound inquirers, men required something more than the childlike pietism of Klopstock, the airy elegance of Wieland, or that philosophy of sentiment — that analysis of man's weakness, so apart from sympathy with men's interests, which Goethe had exhibited in 'Werther' and 'Clavigo.' Something indeed was wanting still; something, it is true, which in order to be popular must necessarily partake of the morbid craving, the unsettled spirit, the revolutionary tendency of the time, but which, in order to outlast the hour, must also develop into fuller force, and diffuse through a wider public whatever in Lessing had been earnest, whatever in Herder promised to be humane. There was a great multitude which as yet in Germany had found no voice; which desired to hear its own discontented heart beat in the pulse of some passionate Author, indignant with what was false, and sympathising with what was free. Never, in Germany, had there been a time more favourable to a writer (no matter what his other defects) who, shouldering aside courts and schoolmen, should address himself manfully to men.

CHAPTER III.

The publication of 'The Robbers' — Schiller's life at Stuttgart — His love for Laura — and poems in the Anthology — 'The Robbers' — Brought out on the stage — Schiller's arrest — Fears, and determination to escape from Würtemberg.

At this time there was published at Mannheim a strange, rugged, fiery melodrame, in which, amidst uncouth masses of extravagant diction, — flashed a spirit true to all the turbulent and unsettled philosophy of the hour — and which seemed destined to announce and to animate the revolution of a world: — 'The Robbers' appeared, and the sensation it excited spread through the mind of Germany like fire through flax; — nor through Germany alone — it produced in France the liveliest enthusiasm; it even stirred to its depths the calm intellect of England. It was, in fact, the most earnest Revolutionary fiction that had yet revealed what lay hid in the History of the Age. — What the irruption of the old Germans was in the midst of the smooth and decrepit civilisation of Rome, — was the burst of this new German amidst the hollow conventions which under the *ancien régime* less guarded the life of Virtue than entombed her corpse.

'The Robbers' is one sweeping uncompromising defiance of the sober proprieties in which the mature see decorum and the young dissimulation. It is the baseness of the World that makes Karl Moor a crim-

inal. It is in proportion to his exaggerated nobleness that he is unfitted for Society. It is because he is a giant that he cannot live amongst the dwarfs. He commences life with many virtues, and it is the mediocrity of life that turns every virtue into sin. It is his sympathy with poverty and suffering, with the virtuous and oppressed that has banished the Demigod to the rock — and afflicted him with the ever-gnawing vulture.

That a work like this, so conceived, and executed with all the power which can whirl along the passions of the crowd, must have produced a great deal of mischief at the time, may be readily allowed. No man can disturb the settled course of opinion, right or wrong, without doing evil as well as good. — Whether Genius innovates in a poem, or Science in a manufacture, some minds in the one case must be thrown into disorder, some hands in the other thrown out of employ. But Genius and Science must still obey the great instincts of their being — the one still innovate, the other still invent. In the moral constitution of nature, they are the great alterative, the "Sturm-Bad," which first fevers and convulses, then purifies and strengthens. But nothing could be farther from the mind of the Boy from whose unpractised hand came this rough Titan sketch, than to unsettle virtue, in his delineations of crime. Virtue was then, as it continued to the last, his Ideal — and if at the first he shook the statue on its pedestal, it was but from the rudeness of the caress that sought to warm it into life.*

* Goethe himself has somewhere said that the most universal effect of the highest Genius is to *unsettle;* and certainly

The original sketch of this drama Schiller had completed two years before the publication. But he kept it by him till he had completed his medical studies, towards the end of 1780, and been appointed by the Duke to the office of Surgeon to a regiment. He then
1781. considered himself a free agent, and after
Ætat. 22. searching in vain for a bookseller to hazard the necessary expenses, he published 'The Robbers' at his own cost.

If the popularity of the work was dazzling, the aversion it excited in some was as intense as the admiration it called forth in others. But the most formidable critic was the Grand Duke himself. This uncouth drama displeased his taste no less than it revolted his opinions. He sent for the author, and bade him in future eschew poetry, and stick to medicine; or, if he needs must write, submit his productions to the revision of his Prince. It is easy to sneer at the conduct of the man of power to the man of genius; but the Grand Duke was scarcely to blame, for there are few individuals now-a-days whose taste 'The Robbers' will not offend, and we may judge of the abhorrence it excited at that time in others, besides the Grand Duke, by the words addressed by an illustrious personage to Goethe, "If I were a God, and deliberating whether I should create the world, and foresaw that in that world

it has ever been so where its effect upon its age could be traced — witness Cervantes, Bacon, Luther, Milton (especially in his prose works). Shakspeare, not studied in his own time, has influenced, by unsettling, the literary mind of three Nations at the least: in our own day, Byron and Wordsworth are, in their several ways, equal Innovators.

Schiller's 'Robbers' would appear, I would not create it." Meanwhile, however, the young Poet had commenced a correspondence with the Freiherr von Dalberg, a nobleman intrusted with the superintendence of the Theatre at Mannheim, and the play was to be remodelled for the stage. Simultaneously January, 1782. appeared many lyrics and minor poems of the author, contributions to a miscellany entitled 'The Anthology,' and set up in concert with some of his friends. A large portion of these performances, characterised, it is true, by power, though distorted, and originality, though uncouth, still belonged to a very inferior and coarse school of poetry, known in Germany by the significant title of the 'Storm and Stress'* — a school of which some notion may be gleaned by those who turn to that later era in our own literature, when the servile herd of imitators mixed up, on their staring canvas, the sepia of Matthew Lewis with the gamboge and vermilion of Lord Byron. Most of these Schiller rejected from the collected edition of his works; some of those retained have been wisely corrected and compressed. Such as they were, however, they added to the sudden celebrity of the writer. And now, while Germany began to ring with the name of the young Poet, what was his life? He lodged in a small apartment, which he shared with a young officer named Kapff, who had quitted the academy at the same time. Kapff is said to have been of dissolute habits,** and to

* The German phrase is thus happily translated by Mr. Carlyle, in one of his 'Miscellaneous Writings.'

** Schwab — who rests this assertion against Kapff upon *unprinted*, and, therefore, very suspicious testimony. Probably

have occasionally misled his wild and impetuous companion into some irregularities; favoured the more by the general licence of a town to which the earlier example of the reigning Duke had given a tone of manners the reverse of austere.* Still such irregularities never degenerated into habit, and were counteracted in their effects upon the mind by Schiller's frequent visits to his excellent family, the tender warnings of his mother, the fortunate narrowness of his finances,** the professional demands upon his time, and that passion for literature, with which systematic indulgence in dissipation and disorder is, it is true, not always incompatible, but to which it is certainly opposed. Above all, perhaps, we must be permitted to believe that the young Poet was saved from more vagrant and unworthy excesses, by that great purifier of youth — First Love. In the same house lodged the widow of a captain, who appears, by all probable accounts, to have been the original of the 'Laura,' to whom the most impassioned of all his love-verses are addressed. A humorous, but somewhat flippant, friend of Schiller's — Scharffenstein — has described this lady in the same spirit of caricature with which he has treated of the noble image of Schiller himself. He says, "she was not pretty, nor clever; but had something about her, good-natured, *piquant*, and attractive." One of Schiller's biographers hints at unpublished accounts, less flattering; but what is unpublished is necessarily unsifted

poor Kapff lived like most young soldiers, neither worse nor better.

* Hoffmeister.

** Madame von Wolzogen.

and unsupported; and we have no evidence whatsoever to invalidate that on which the Poet himself commands our interest for one who could make so vivid an impression on his heart. Schiller was, no doubt, at least as good a judge of beauty and of cleverness as his friend Scharffenstein.

It would be impossible for a critic of common sense to suppose, with certain metaphysical commentators, that this love was merely Platonic. Platonic love in Schiller! As well talk of Platonic love in Burns! The poems themselves, in their very faults, bear internal evidence of the healthful and natural passion of the man, which takes poetry for its vent — not the vanity of the poetaster who would simulate the great passion of man, in order to obtain a vent for his verses.

But whatever this affection, it seems to have burned out from its very fierceness, and (though, years afterwards, the Poet speaks of the resignation of Laura as the great sacrifice of youth), it was obviously very different from that steady, pure, and permanent attachment which ultimately made the happiness of his manhood.

At last, on the 13th of January, 1782, 'The Robbers' appeared on the stage at Mannheim. The sensation the printed play had produced served to crowd the theatre. Near and far, from Heidelberg and Darmstadt, from Frankfort, Mayence, and Worms, gathered the audience. The play lasted five hours. The success in print was trivial to that upon the stage. The fiery rebellion of thought which it embodied became more startling when animated by the art of the

greatest actors of the time,* and hailed by the enthusiasm of spectators, in whom, as everywhere in 1782, the spirit of Revolution was astir.

We can easily imagine the impatient desire of Schiller to witness his own triumph. He went by stealth to Mannheim. In an obscure corner of the crowded house, the author beheld the living embodiment of his own thoughts and passions. He saw himself raised at once into that mighty power — the mover of the hearts of men. He returned to Stuttgart confirmed for life in the vocation his genius had adopted. "If Germany," he wrote to Dalberg on his 17th Jan. return, "shall one day recognise in me a 1782. Dramatic Poet, I must date the epoch from the last week."

But in proportion to the ardour of his inclinations, was the restraint of Schiller's actual life. At Mannheim, he was the freeman, the poet; he returned to Stuttgart to sink again into the subaltern and the subject. Some expressions in the third act of 'The Robbers,' reflecting upon the national character of the

* Bök acted Karl Moor with prodigious effect: but that is a part which almost plays itself. Iffland, a man of real genius, elevated the disagreeable character of Franz Moor into the dignity of an Iago. His representation of this part seems to have been one of the most perfect as well as one of the most popular triumphs of the stage. His thin figure and meagre countenance, suiting well with the ideal of a formal hypocrite, served to increase the actuality of the personation. Iffland, like Schiller, was commencing his career; he was then about six-and-twenty, according to Schiller's biographers; three-and-twenty according to other authorities, *who state* his birth to have been in April 1759.

Grisons, gave such offence to the objects of the rude and boyish satire, that their complaint was published in 'The Hamburgh Correspondent,' and, by the mediation of a man named Walter, who bore some personal grudge to Schiller, laid before the Grand Duke. The result seems to have been a very severe reprimand on the part of the Duke, and a peremptory injunction to Schiller to confine his studies to Medicine — his publications to such as befitted his profession — to abandon all connexion with States under other jurisdiction (meaning Mannheim), limiting his ambition to his calling, and his connexions to his country.* Such a command could not be obeyed by a man urged to resist by the stronger despotism of his own genius. Already new and vast designs were opening to Schiller's intellectual ambition; already he had commenced and proceeded far in the tragedy of 'Fiesco;' already meditated a drama on the fate of Don Carlos of Spain. To ask him to renounce these projects was to ask him to renounce the very mind by which they were formed. His first visit to the Mannheim theatre had been undetected or overlooked; he went again in the following May, and was put for fourteen days under arrest. Dangers now beset him; dark and sinister menaces were repeated to him by officious friends, and exaggerated perhaps in their import by the gloom of his imagination. But the dangers in themselves were real and imminent. Before his eyes was the fate of the Poet Schubart,** eight years imprisoned for displeasing

* Schwab, &c.

** An Appendix to Mr. Carlyle's 'Life of Schiller' contains an interesting account of this unfortunate poet.

the jealousies of Power. What fate could seem more terrible to one drunk with the desire of liberty, and eager to spread the wings of his genius? Stuttgart, nay, all Suabian scenes, as he himself complains, in a letter to Dalberg, "became intolerable and loathed." He could have had but small comfort from his family. His father as yet regarded his notoriety with dislike and fear. He was not a prophet in his own country, nor an honour to his own hearth; — with disgust he saw all around him; — with sanguine self-confidence he cast his eyes beyond. He formed the only resolution natural to his circumstances and worthy of his independence: he resolved to emancipate body and soul both; to fly from Stuttgart, and throw himself on the world.

CHAPTER IV.

Flight from Stuttgart — 'Fiesco' read to the actors — Adventures and wanderings — Schiller finds refuge at Bauerbach — Commencement of 'Cabal and Love.'

Amongst Schiller's companions was a warmhearted enthusiastic musician, two years younger than himself, named Andrew Streicher. This youth 1782. became his confidant. Together they brooded over the future — together they conceived and nursed the project of escape. It had been intended that Streicher should proceed to Hamburgh in the spring of the next year, to take lessons in his art from the celebrated Bach.* He persuaded his mother to consent that the date of this journey should be advanced, and the friends settled that Schiller should bear him company. But Schiller, with all his inexperience, and all his fiery ardour, had that strong sense with which true genius prepares for the fulfilment, even of its wildest schemes. He felt the necessity of providing, from his own talents, the materials for their support. He would not leave Stuttgart till his tragedy of 'Fiesco' was nearly completed. In that tragedy lay his fortune and his future. He worked at it night and day — illness seized him, but the work went on. At length it was sufficiently advanced for presentation to the Mannheim Theatre, and the opportunity now offered itself for escape.

* Not the great Sebastian Bach, who died in 1750.

The city and its neighbourhood were astir with the visit of the Grand Duke Paul of Russia, and his young Princess, niece to the Duke of Würtemberg. In the midst of these festivities the flight was planned.

It was obviously necessary to conceal from the elder Schiller the designs of the son; the military notions and military duty of the former might not only lead him to forbid, but to disclose them. And the young Poet was moreover anxious, that whatever the displeasure of his sovereign, it might fall on himself alone — not involve his father. But his eldest and favourite sister was admitted to his confidence; — the little girl who had wandered with the dreaming boy through the ruins of Hohenstaufen, and amidst the pines of Larch, was become a woman, capable of sympathising with the lofty hopes of the adventurous man: and at last, a day or two before the meditated departure, the truth was broken to Schiller's mother. With his friend Streicher, and the wife of the Stage Manager at Mannheim, Madame Meier (whom, as well as the Director Dalberg, the royal festivities had drawn to Stuttgart, but from whom the secret was carefully kept), Schiller for the last time visited his family at "Solitude." He took the opportunity, which his father's absorption in his own account of the royal preparations afforded, to steal with his mother unobserved from the room. After an hour's absence, he returned — alone. The affectionate gaze of Streicher saw what he had suffered in that parting interview, by the redness of his eyes. The important day was now fixed — the 17th of September.

Streicher removed from Schiller's lodging a bundle, containing the dress which was to be substituted for

the uniform of the Regimental Surgeon — some linen, and a few books — among which were the works of Haller and Shakspeare. But when Streicher came to fetch Schiller himself — after the return of the latter from his final visit to the Hospital — he found the young enthusiast with Klopstock's Odes in his hands. A favourite ode had given unseasonable inspiration to his own muse, and the impatient musician was forced to wait and hear, not only the seductive ode, but the poem it had called forth. At last all was ready — day passed — night came — Schiller had assumed his disguise; three-and-twenty florins constituted the Poet's wealth, eight-and-twenty the Musician's; two trunks, containing books and apparel — a brace of pistols — and a small clavichord, summed up the effects of the fugitives. At ten o'clock the vehicle which contained the adventurers rolled from Streicher's lodging to the Esslingen Gate (the darkest of all the City Gates), at which the Lieutenant of the Watch was a firm friend of the Poet's. "Halt! who goes there?" "Dr. Ritter and Dr. Wolf, both bound to Esslingen." "Pass."

The escape is made. Towards midnight they beheld, at the left, the illuminated Ludwigsburg, like a mount of fire; further on, and at the distance of a mile from their road, they saw the castle of "Solitude," and the neighbouring buildings, lighted up in honour of the Royal visitor. In the clear air, all was so distinctly visible, that the poet could point out to his companion his parents' home; and a suppressed sigh — a soft "O meine Mutter" — escaped him! So fled from the capital of Würtemberg, Friedrich Schiller, "empty" — as, with little exaggeration, he himself has said,

"of purse and hope;" esteemed as a rebel by his Sovereign; condemned as a scapegrace by his father; regarded but as an imprudent reckless scribbler, marring his own fair prospects for a vain ambition, by his associates! — He who now visits that capital finds little to arrest his interest — except one colossal statue, in a broad space near the Royal palace; before which his guide will bid him halt to contemplate Friedrich Schiller — the pride of his Fatherland!

The travellers reached Mannheim in safety. They unpacked their boxes, and put on their best clothes; it was a holiday — they were out of the Grand Duke's dominions — they were free! Schiller's hope was in his 'Fiesco.' In a few sheets of paper lay all that was to give bread to existence, independence to labour, and glory to ambition. Dalberg was at Stuttgart; but Meier, the manager, received them with kindness. When he heard, with astonishment, the bold step Schiller had taken, he urged the expediency of an immediate letter to the Grand Duke. This, indeed, Schiller had already resolved upon. In the small German States, the relation between prince and subject is more parental and patriarchal than in the larger Monarchies of Europe: if the prince be more despotic, the subject can be more familiar. After dinner, to which the young friends were invited by Meier, Schiller withdrew into another apartment, and wrote frankly to his Sovereign; it was a letter at once manly and respectful. He represented how impossible he found it to live upon his professional gains as a surgeon; — his income could only be made sufficient by his literary labours. He prayed for permission to try his fortune for a short time out of the Duke's dominions, and declared his willingness ul-

timately to return on receiving his Sovereign's pardon. The letter was enclosed to the chief of Schiller's regiment, General Augé, with a petition to present, and to support it. The next day Madame Meier returned from Stuttgart, with the news that Schiller's flight was already notorious; and that it was expected that the Grand Duke would demand the delivery of his person. As Schiller, however, was not a soldier, he could not be treated and reclaimed as a deserter; still it was deemed advisable that he should not show himself till the Grand Duke's answer was received. A letter from General Augé came at last; it preserved perfect silence as to the request Schiller had preferred, and only announced to him the permission, or implied the order, immediately to return. Schiller hastened to reply to the General, that he could not regard the Grand Duke's message as a compliance with his request, which he again respectfully urged. A second letter from the General laconically repeated the purport of the former one. Schiller's pride, his spirit of independence, and his honour became engaged. He could not recall the step which had delivered him from an intolerable bondage: the die was cast, and he resolved, as he himself has expressed it, "to exchange the citizenship of his country for that of the world."

Meanwhile Streicher had fired the manager with his accounts of 'Fiesco;' a day and hour were fixed for Schiller to read his new performance to the more distinguished actors, among whom was Iffland. The young poet commenced his reading, — all listened in silence, — not a word of approbation. At the end of the first act some slipped away; at the end of the second, the disappointment grew more unequivocal;

and a quarter of an hour afterwards, the poet had lost all his listeners except Iffland. Meier now took aside Streicher, and asked him seriously, "if Schiller really were the author of 'The Robbers'?" — "Certainly," said the astonished friend. "Then," answered Meier, "he has exhausted his strength in his first performance." But the manuscript was left with the experienced manager, and the next morning, when Streicher repaired, full of painful anxiety, to Meier, he was accosted with "You are right, 'Fiesco' is a masterpiece! — better fitted for the stage than 'The Robbers.'" It was Schiller's Suabian dialect, and his high-pitched monotonous mode of declamation, that had done such injustice to his genius — a perusal of the play excited Meier's warmest admiration, and Streicher went back to his friend with the welcome news, that arrangements would be made to produce 'Fiesco' on the stage. Alterations requiring some time were nevertheless indispensable, and it became necessary to remove farther from the power of his offended prince. Warned by letters from Stuttgart, Schiller and his friend resolved to pass to Darmstadt, near Frankfort. Their money was nearly gone. Sorely pressed as he was, Schiller had so tender a consideration for his parents, that he would not apply to them, lest he might bring upon his father the suspicion of conniving at his flight. With enough barely to defray the expenses of their pilgrimage on foot, the two friends set off one day at noon; rested at night in a village; resumed their way the next morning over one of the most striking roads in Europe (the Bergstrasse); continued their journey for twelve hours; rested from six in the evening till midnight, when they were wakened and alarmed by the

drums of a reveille. Notwithstanding Schiller felt himself unwell, with the early morning the journey was resumed; the day was serene and clear, but Schiller's strength failed his spirit; his step grew every moment more weary, his cheek more pale: at last, on entering a wood, he was unable to proceed further; he laid himself down for an hour's rest upon the grass; and Streicher, seated on the trunk of a tree, anxious and sorrowful, watched beside him. The young man, struggling with his destiny, may take heart for the future when he contemplates the picture of that wearied sleeper, homeless and penniless, but already on his path to the conquest of Destiny itself,· and the only throne which no revolution shakes, and no time decays — in the hearts of men.

They reached Frankfort at last, and Schiller addressed a letter to Dalberg: — "When I tell you," he says, "that I am flying my country, I describe to you my whole fate. My safety obliged me to withdraw in haste from Stuttgart. My sole hopes rested on a removal to Mannheim; there, I trusted, by your Excellency's assistance, that my new drama might enable me to clear myself from debt, and permanently better my condition. This was frustrated through the hasty departure to which I was compelled. I might blush to make such disclosures to you, but I know they do not debase me. If my former conduct — if all that your Excellency knows of my character — can induce confidence in my honour, let me frankly ask your assistance. Greatly as I need the anticipated profit from 'Fiesco,' the play cannot be ready for the theatre in less than five weeks. My heart was oppressed — my poetic dreams fled before the sense of my condition.

But if at the time specified the play could be ready, and, I trust, worthy, — from that belief I take the courage to ask the advance of what would then be due. I need it, perhaps, more now than I may ever do hereafter. I owed nearly 200 florins when I left Stuttgart. This gives me, I own, more uneasiness than all the care for my future fate. I shall have no rest till in that quarter I am free."

After this letter he was more relieved; and yet, on returning from the post-office to which he took it, he paused on the bridge, beneath which flows the Maine: he gazed long in silence on the river, and said at last, "Which is the deeper, that water or my sufferings?" But no brave man, and no true poet, can remain long despondent in the midst of a world enriched by the activity of his kind, and upheld by the goodness of his Maker. The very sight of that bustling scene; the vessels sailing to and fro; the river gilded by the setting sun; the clear evening air; the fresh and cheerful wave; amidst the smiles of Nature, the evidences of that Nature's subjugation to the will and the power of man — these gradually drew him from his sadness, and reanimated his soul. His very misfortunes, throwing him so wholly on his own resources, quickened his invention, and the next evening he announced to his friend, that he had conceived the plan of a domestic play, entitled* 'Louise Miller,' which was afterwards completed, and finally became famous under the title of 'Cabal and Love.'

* According to Madame von Wolzogen (Schiller's sister-in-law), he had, however, first thought of the subject of this play during his military arrest at Stuttgart.

A letter from Meier arrived at last, to say, that while 'Fiesco' remained unfit for the stage, Dalberg could not make the proposed advance; that the work must be completed before he could say more. No disappointment could be more cruel. But Schiller bore it undauntedly. He uttered no complaint; not one harsh, one indignant word passed his lips. He prepared only to comply with the condition that was imposed. The friends were reduced to a few small coins, when Streicher received thirty florins, for which he had written to his mother; and with this aid they left Frankfort. A line was, however, first despatched to Meier, requesting him to meet and agree upon some place in which 'Fiesco' might be completed with safety and in repose.

Finally, it was settled that Schiller should take up his residence in an inn at Oggersheim, once more changing his name from Ritter to Schmidt; and here, still accompanied by the devoted Streicher, he shut himself up to compose his glorious taskwork. But so much, while most occupied, did his mind shrink from what was ordained to it, that, instead of completing 'Fiesco,' his domestic drama of 'Cabal and Love' engrossed all his thoughts and labours. Perhaps in a play which sought to prove the tyranny and the prejudice of conventional rank, he found something more congenial to his peculiar condition than the loftier conception of the conspirator of Genoa. The two friends shared one chamber, one bed; the Poet had his play—the Musician his instrument. And Streicher, whom we esteem no less for his self-devotion than Schiller for his indomitable courage, soothed the labours of his friend with the notes of his clavichord. Again their

resources were exhausted; again poor Streicher applied to his mother for the money intended for his professional journey to Hamburgh. Necessity then tore Schiller from the new work, and restored him to the old. Early in November 'Fiesco' was completed.

But fresh disappointments awaited Schiller. After the suspense of a week, Dalberg reported of 'Fiesco' that a part of it was not yet fitted for the stage, and that it must either be rejected or improved. Nothing could be more chilling, more laconic, more heartless, to all appearance, than the reply of this literary courtier. Schiller had been greatly instigated in his flight from Stuttgart by his reliance on Dalberg's professions of esteem and friendship. And now not a word to comfort, much less a florin to support! Before the laborious student rose the sense of a condition thoroughly desolate and alarming — the recollection of his debts at Stuttgart; more than all, the remorse of having implicated his faithful friend in his own ruin. It was evident that Dalberg, with that sympathy which all courtiers have for the grievances of all courts, regarded Schiller as a political offender, and feared to befriend one with whom a Prince was displeased.

Two resources were left: firstly, to find for the two plays a publisher who would advance some money upon their probable profits; and secondly, to take advantage of a generous offer — an invitation which might well put to the blush the niggard heartlessness of Dalberg.

At the Stuttgart Academy, three young men of good birth, named von Wolzogen, had been educated contemporaneously with Schiller. The eldest of these, Wilhelm, was afterwards amongst his most intimate

friends; their mother, a widow, in straitened circumstances, had known and admired the Poet at Stuttgart; she offered him an asylum in a small house she possessed at Bauerbach, about two miles from Meiningen. The advancement of her own sons was in the hands of the Duke of Würtemberg. She hazarded much by receiving into her house the persecuted fugitive; but the magnanimity of her friendship would not take the peril of a good action into account. Thither, then, Schiller resolved to fly. A Mannheim bookseller, named Schwan, advanced upon 'Fiesco' sufficient to discharge the debt incurred at Oggersheim, and defray the expenses of the journey to Bauerbach. In a winter's night — the snow deep upon the ground — the generous Streicher bade him farewell; or rather, no word was spoken, no embrace exchanged — a long and silent clasp of the hand was the only token of an affection which had endured so much hardship, and consoled through so much sorrow. "But yet," says Schiller's German biographer, with simple eloquence, "the Musician, after fifty years, was filled with grief when he recalled the moment in which he had left a truly kingly heart — the noblest of the German poets — alone, and in misfortune."

CHAPTER V.

Residence at Bauerbach.

As on a December evening, 1782, the wanderer beheld, beneath the old ruins of the Castle of Henneberg, the lights of the scattered houses of the village of Bauerbach gleaming through the deep snow, he felt, as he himself says, "like a shipwrecked man, who struggles at last from the waves." Here, though the family themselves were absent, everything that could comfort and welcome him, awaited. He remained unknown and secure; a bookseller of eminence at Meiningen (Reinwald), who afterwards married his sister, was admitted to his secret, and cheered his solitude with books and his own society. Sometimes he made a companion of the steward of the property, played with him at chess, or wandered, with him, through the woods which surround that country.* The calm, the security and the solitude were, at first, beneficial to his mind and to his labours. The two plays were completed, and despatched to the bookseller, Schwan. But now, his ardent imagination, having thrown off its tasks, began to prey upon itself. He passed, though for a short time, and with reluctance, into that state common to all good men, in proportion to their ori-

* A singular anecdote is related by Madame von Wolzogen. One day, in his walk with the steward, Schiller paused in a lonely spot between wild rocks, and was seized with a notion that a dead body lay below, In fact, a poor carrier had been murdered there, and his corpse had been buried in the very place.

ginal affection for their species — *misanthropy*. No man ever was, in reality, a misanthrope, but from too high an opinion of mankind, and too keen a perception of ideal virtue. "I had embraced," complains Schiller, "half the world, with feelings the most glowing, to find a lump of ice within my arms."* The wild and desolate scenery around him — the dreariness of winter — served to increase the gloom that seized him. His prospects were, in reality, such as might render the hardest sensitive, and the boldest anxious. The present might be safe, but at any moment he might be cast again upon the world. His gratitude to his friends made him feel that his asylum must be resigned the moment the Grand Duke discovered it. And, even as it was, could his spirit long bear the thought of dependence, obscurity, and disguise? Still he was without a country, still without a career. He seriously thought of abandoning poetry, and returning to the medical profession; sometimes the wilder notion of exile to England — to America — possessed him. This state of mind was, perhaps, fortunately invaded by a romantic and hopeless fancy, rather than the love for which he mistook it.

Madame von Wolzogen visited Bauerbach.

In Charlotte, the youngest daughter of his benefactress, Schiller found an image to replace his Laura. He could not expect encouragement from the mother, nor does it appear that his attachment was returned

* Shortly after this period, on his settlement at Mannheim, he announced his intention of translating Shakspeare's 'Timon,' and says, "In all Shakspeare there is no piece in which he more loudly and eloquently speaks to my heart — or in which I have learned more of the Science of Life." — *Rhein. Thal. Heft.* 1, s. 13.

by Charlotte; but he was at that age when feeling is easily awakened, and as easily misunderstood by the heart which feels it. The love of youth, before it settles for life, hovers over all to whom the fancy allures it. The Cupid, with the expanded wings, and the arrow on the string, is but the false Anteros: — In the true Eros, the wings are folded, and the bow is broken. Certainly this was the most critical period in the life of Schiller, moral and intellectual. If new persecutions, whether of power or of opinion, had now befallen him, it is at least doubtful whether he would have ever attained to a name at once so revered and so beloved — whether indignation and disgust might not, in a spirit so proud and so impetuous, have ripened into permanent defiance of the world, and its existing orders and forms.* Who shall say whether it would have been in the power of Schiller, in the nature of man, to have preserved the genial purity and kindliness which had been the early concomitants and softeners of his restless and fiery genius, if, at this moment, he had undergone from the public of his fatherland the same fearful calumny and injustice which, in the anguish and the trial of existence, hooted Byron into exile? None of the earlier writings of Byron can be compared for a moment, in their offences against settled opinions, to those which the youth of Schiller sent forth to agitate society and inflame the mind. 'The Robbers,' 'Fiesco,' 'Cabal and Love,' are, one and all, defiances of Prescription. The revolutionary stamp is upon each. To ordinary observers they might well appear the more

* "Oh!" he exclaims, in a letter to Madame von Wolzogen, "you cannot believe how *necessary* it is to me to find *noble* human natures!"

dangerous from the systematic purpose which seemed to pervade them all. In England, such works would have given impunity to the slander of literary envy, and the bigotry of political hate. But there was a nobler temper in the German public; — there was granted to Schiller what, despite the greater temptations of birth, and beauty, and prevalent example, was never conceded to our immortal countryman — the allowance for unsettled youth and imperfect education; — and the result should be a lesson to the public in all lands: His manhood was the splendid redeemer of his youth.

Suddenly, in the midst of Schiller's anxious gloom and conflicting emotions — at the very moment when hypochondria was fast darkening over his heart and unnerving his intellect — the sun broke out upon him. The Duke of Würtemberg, whose resentment never seems to have been ungenerous or vindictive, tacitly relinquished all thoughts of persecuting a man in whom the whole of Germany began to feel a romantic interest. The courtier Dalberg perceived that the time was come when, without imprudence, he might bring to the aid of his theatre the author of the most popular drama of the time. He invited Schiller to Mannheim. The young Poet's plays were to be produced upon the stage — the object of an ambition, modest as to temporal means, vast as to intellectual empire, was attained. He was appointed, with a fixed, though very limited salary, Poet to the Theatre at Mannheim, then the first in Germany. On the evening of the 22nd July, 1783, he arrived at the town in which the foundations of his dramatic glory had been laid; and, at the house of Meier he was once more beheld — but, this time, with a cheerful and radiant countenance — by his faithful Streicher.

CHAPTER VI.

Residence at Mannheim.

But it is one thing to print a drama — another to represent it. 'Fiesco' still required great alterations to adapt it to the stage. One essential cause of the theatrical success of Schiller, was the earnest readiness with which he lent himself to the suggestions of practical criticism. He was not like many of our young authors who write for the stage, and will not sacrifice a passage to what they call the arrogant ignorance of managers and actors. Unless the Poet obtains and follows the advice of manager and actor, he may depend upon it that he will never command an audience. While employed upon the task of revising 'Fiesco,' and its companion Drama, Schiller was seized with fever, which exhausted his strength and protracted his labours. But, in nothing is Schiller more an example to us than in his iron perseverance and diligent industry. These were the very elements of his genius. Perhaps they are so of all genius that accomplishes what is great and lasting. Through weakness and through sickness he toiled on.

'Fiesco' was not so successful at Mannheim as had been anticipated. Schiller complained that the public of the Palatine could not understand it; that with them Republican Liberty was an empty sound. But, in Berlin and Frankfort, it produced a considerable sensation, which reacted on the Mannheim audiences, and

soon secured its fame. It was followed, in March or April,* by 'Cabal and Love,' which obtained the most brilliant reception.

On the first representation of this drama Streicher found his reward for all his friendship. He sate by the side of Schiller; he heard the rapturous applauses it excited; he saw all eyes turn to the Poet; he had shared the adversity — he participated in the triumph.**

Schiller's existence was now assured. He had found a country, as well as confirmed his fame. He was acknowledged a subject of the Elector Palatine. He had no longer any cause of apprehension from the Duke of Würtemberg. He was elected a member of the German Literary Society established at Mannheim. The circle of his intimates was thus enlarged amongst men of the same pursuits, and his ambition corrected and guided, by comparison between himself and others. New resources were opened to him; and his ambition could not readily settle upon any one of the numerous objects by which it was allured. He proposed at first to translate 'Timon of Athens,' and 'Macbeth,' but ultimately returned to 'Don Charles.' This was the first drama, commenced in the retirement of Bauerbach, which he had attempted in verse; and herein he first ascended, though with an uncertain step, towards the higher and purer realm of ideal fiction, in which his

* On the 9th of March, according to Schwab; somewhere in April, according to Hoffmeister.

** At the end of the second act the audience shouted applause so much more emphatically than usual, that Schiller, taken by surprise, rose and bowed.

genius finally fixed its home. A marked change, indeed, was now visible in his modes of thought. He took loftier conceptions of the aims and duties of the Poet. He became aware of the moral deficiencies of 'The Robbers;' he meditated a sequel to that play, which should be an ample apology for its predecessor, and in which "all immorality should be resolved into the highest moral."* He reassumed his early instincts of the preacher; not indeed as from the pulpit, but from the boards. He laid down to others and to himself the principle, that the Stage should take its rank with the Church and the School amongst the primary institutions of a state. In proportion as representation must be more vivid than dead book-lore and cold narration, so assuredly might he think that the stage should work lessons deeper and more lasting than mere moralising systems.** Whether he did not overestimate the possible influence of the theatre in modern times, may be reasonably doubted. But that very exaggeration could only serve to purify his ambition and elevate his aims.

Meanwhile, his pecuniary circumstances, though improved, and though, perhaps, sufficient for a strict economist, were not adequate to the wants of a man so liberal, so charitable, and so careless of detail and method. Wrapt in his ideal realm, he forgot the exigencies of practical life. "Hogarth," says his biographer, "might have been inspired by the disorder of the young Poet's chamber." His debt at Stuttgart still weighed upon him, till at length his landlord lent him

* Schiller's 'Brief an Dalberg,' s. 85, &c.

** Hoffmeister.

the money to defray it. He resolved upon new efforts to emancipate himself from all difficulties. He undertook a periodical called the 'Rhenish Thalia,' from which he anticipated to reap an independence. In the announcement of this work he speaks thus of his own views and hopes: "I write as a Citizen of the World who serves no prince. Early I left my father-land, exchanging it for the great world, which I only beheld at a distance, and through a glass." He proceeds to speak of his education; his poetic enthusiasm; his 'Robbers;' his flight from Würtemberg; and thus continues: — "All my former connexions are dissolved. The Public has become my all, my study, my sovereign, and my confidant. To the Public alone henceforth I belong. Before this tribunal, and this tribunal only, I take my stand. Something of greatness hovers over me as I resolve to know no restraint but the sentence of the world — appeal to no throne but the soul of Man!" Dec. 1784.

This frank and stately egotism was thoroughly characteristic of Schiller. And the reader will readily understand how much, as in the case of Byron, the admiration for the Poet became associated with interest in the Man. Grave men, whom he did not know, wrote to offer him their homage; fair maidens, whom he had not seen, transmitted to him their miniatures. But in the midst of his labours and his increasing fame, his heart was lonely. He pined for love and for female society. In the bustle of the town he recalled with a sigh the retirement of Bauerbach. Forgetful of the gloom which had, there, so often overshadowed his solitude, he looked self-deludingly back to the winter months he had spent amidst its pine-trees as amongst

the happiest of his life. The image of Charlotte von Wolzogen haunted him; but it was rather as the ideal Egeria of the nympholept than as the one living woman who renders all others charmless and indifferent. "To be linked to one," he says, "who shares with us joy and sorrow; who meets us in our emotions, and accommodates her mood to our humours; at her breast to release our souls from the thousand distractions, the thousand wild wishes and unruly passions; and drown all the bitterness of Fortune in the enjoyment of domestic calm; — ah! such were the true delight of life." He proposed openly to Madame von Wolzogen for her daughter Charlotte; but, thoroughly convinced at last of the hopelessness of that pursuit, his desire for love in the abstract soon found its object elsewhere. Margaret, the daughter of Schwan the bookseller, was one in whom he might woo an equal, and reasonably hope to find a return for his affection. She possessed great personal beauty, and a lively turn of mind; "rather devoted," say, with some malice, the good German biographers, "to the world, to literature, and to art, than to the tranquil domestic duties." She was then nineteen years old, and the death of her mother had placed her at the head of the household. Schiller's literary intercourse with her father necessarily drew him much into her society; and about the autumn of 1784, the fair Margaret gained possession of a heart still somewhat too inflammable for constancy. *

* It appears, indeed, that in the interval Schiller had admitted the influence of some wilder and less refined passion than either Margaret Schwan or Charlotte von Wolzogen had inspired, and to which he alludes with frank regret, in a letter some years afterwards to the lady whom he married. The

With the new love he resumed the new drama; and the passion for Margaret burns in many a line which proclaims the affection of the ill-fated Carlos. 1785. But new circumstances began to conspire against the repose of Schiller, and his continuance at Mannheim. The periodical he had commenced, without greatly increasing his resources, embroiled him with the actors. Those worthy personages were mightily concerned at the freedom of his criticisms; he in turn was no less aggrieved by their slovenly repetition of his verses, and their irreverent treatment of himself. His ambition had been diverted into new paths, by the dignity of Councillor* of the Duchy of Weimar, conferred upon him by the Duke, who in a visit to Mannheim had granted him an audience. The honour in which literary men were held in the court of Weimar inflamed his imagination. He had not yet entirely resigned the practical world for the ideal; and in Schiller, despite his want of economy and method, there were talents and capacities which were not restricted solely to the pen. One of those who knew him best says of him, no doubt with truth, "that if he had been withheld from the destiny of a great poet, he could not have failed, perforce, to have become a remarkable man of action.** For action Schiller certainly pos-

object of this passing fancy has apparently baffled the research of his biographers.

* A merely nominal dignity — but it is difficult for an Englishman to comprehend the eagerness with which these petty distinctions are sought for in Germany.

** Scharffenstein. At a later period, Goethe expressed the same opinion.

sessed those peculiar qualities which usually ensure success in a career once fairly opened; — indomitable will — the power of earnest application — inflexible honour — and a strong sense of justice.

The rank of Councillor to the Duchy of Weimar thus opened to him a path more alluring than that in which he passed, not over the flowers his youth had fancied, as Poet to a Theatre. After much consultation with some friends at Leipsic, and with Schwan, and in the midst of all kinds of disgusts and difficulties in his residence at Mannheim, it was determined that he should remove to Leipsic. He resolved there to devote himself to Jurisprudence, and to use Poetry, if we may borrow the admirable saying of Sir Walter Scott, 'as his staff, not his crutch.' He communicated these intentions to Streicher, who shared his new enthusiasm. What might not so much industry, in a mind already exercised in severe thought and arduous studies, accomplish in a few years? Some honourable appointment at the least in one of the small Saxon Courts. The friends grew warm over their hopes, and agreed at last to suspend all correspondence till the Poet was Minister, and the Musician Chapel Master! Thus ends — amidst new projects, and on the eve of a new flight — the First Period in the life and career of Friedrich Schiller.

He was only in his twenty-sixth year — and how much had he effected! His name was already a household word in Europe. His genius had not been stationary; the most marked improvement in taste, in thought, in self-cultivation distinguished his more recent from his earlier compositions. Even at this time, the genial and gentle Wieland had

1785.

prophesied that Friedrich Schiller would be the first man of his age. The very misfortunes, the very errors of his life, had served to augment the true knowledge of genius — viz., experience of the heart — its sufferings — its passions — its infirmities. In 'Fiesco,' as in 'The Robbers,' there is much that is distorted and exaggerated, but the characters move in a far higher atmosphere — the language is chaster and more severe — the descriptive passages want nothing but rhythm to have the beauty and the charm of poetry. All the men are drawn on the large scale of heroes. The magnificence of Fiesco, and the austerity of Verrina, are no doubt contrasted with too distinct a force for the delicacy of art, but the fault is that of a giant, who has not yet learned to subdue and regulate his strength. Still more promise of real and permanent excellence is to be found in 'Cabal and Love;' for, to idealise common life is impossible, save to those who have already perceived the great truths in which high Poetry moves and breathes. In these plays, the influences which we have noticed in our brief sketch of the state of German Literature are visible. Through the lurid and stormy phantasies of French republicanism — through the hazy mists of Rousseau's passionate sentiment — may yet be discovered glimpses of the robust humanity of Herder — the noble earnestness of Lessing — the last especially. 'Emilia Galotti' speaks in the Domestic Tragedy of 'Cabal and Love,' and its Odoardo transfuses something of his high spirit into the Verrina of 'Fiesco.' Yet finer influences than even these were now at work upon a mind ever shooting onward, or mounting upward. The study of Shakspeare — necessarily intense to one meditating the translation of

'Timon' and 'Macbeth' — led Schiller, not indeed to *imitate* a genius wholly dissimilar to his own, but to ponder upon the attributes of that genius which were within his reach. He began the transition from what may be called the passionate and declamatory drama to the intellectual and analytical. He says of the hero of the tragedy on which he was now employed, "Carlos has the soul from Shakspeare's Hamlet — the pulse from me." There is little in common, it is true, between Carlos and Hamlet; but Schiller had made a great progress in his conceptions of art, when he studied a Hamlet, in order to create a Carlos.

But in this, as in the several periods of his life, the mirror of his heart and his genius is to be found in his minor poems. In their fervour and exaggeration — their beauties and defects — lives immortally the youth of Schiller.

CHAPTER VII.

SECOND PERIOD.

Schiller's arrival at Leipsic — Proposes for Margaret Schwan — Removes to Dresden — His habits, studies, &c. — His infatuation, and departure for Weimar.

SCHILLER arrived at Leipsic in the midst of its famous Fair. His name was soon bruited abroad, and the throng pressed to see him. But though Schiller was not without that noble vanity which pants for applause, and takes enjoyment in renown, the curiosity of idlers could only offend his taste, and wound his pride. "It is a peculiar thing," he says, writing to Schwan, "to have an Author's name. The few men of worth and mark who on this account offer their acquaintance, and whose esteem confers pleasure, are too greatly outweighed by the swarm who, like flesh-flies, buzz around the Author as a monster, and claim him as a colleague on the strength of a few sheets of blotted paper. Many cannot get it into their heads that the Author of 'The Robbers' should be like any other mother's son. They expected at least a crop, the boots of a postilion, and a hunting-whip!"

Meanwhile Schiller continued his contributions to 'The Thalia,' in which a considerable portion of 'Carlos' appeared; laboured with assiduity at the completion of that drama; and composed, in a happy moment, 'The Hymn to Joy,' by far the noblest lyrical poem he had yet achieved. Insensibly the more worldly ambition with which he had quitted Mannheim, died away. The

profession of Jurisprudence was not adopted; but, still anxious to found a livelihood upon some basis more stable than Literature, he meditated a return to Medicine; and, encouraged, perhaps, by the attention and respect he received at Leipsic, he ventured now to demand the hand of Margaret Schwan. After a preface at once modest and manly, he thus opened himself to her father: "My free and unconstrained access to your house, afforded me the opportunity of intimate acquaintance with your amiable daughter; and the frank kind treatment with which both you and she honoured me, tempted my heart to entertain the bold wish of becoming your son. My prospects have hitherto been dim and vague; they begin now to alter in my favour. I will strive with more continuous vigour when the goal is clear. Do you decide whether I can reach it, when the dearest wish of my heart supports my zeal. Yet two short years, and my whole fortune will be determined. . . . The Duke of Weimar was the first person to whom I disclosed myself; his anticipating goodness, and the declaration that he took an interest in my happiness, induced me to confess that that happiness depended on a union with your noble daughter. He expressed satisfaction at my choice. I have reason to hope he will do more, should it come to the point of completing my happiness by this union. I shall add nothing further. I know well that hundreds of others might offer your daughter a more splendid fate than I at this moment can promise her; but that any other heart can be more worthy of her, I venture to deny."*

* We have borrowed the translation of this extract from *Carlyle's 'Life of Schiller'* — the Boston edition, 1833.

A bookseller is generally the last person to choose, as his son-in-law, an Author. He has seen too much of the vicissitudes of an Author's life, and of the airy basis of an Author's hopes in the future, to be flattered by the proposals of a suitor who finds it easier to charm the world than to pay the butcher. He wrote to Schiller a refusal, implying that his daughter's character was not in unison with her wooer's. Till then, a correspondence had been carried on between the young persons; this, Schiller properly and honourably now broke off, to Margaret's surprise, and apparently to her grief, for her father had not communicated to her Schiller's proposal, — a discreet reserve which seems to prove that he did not reckon on her free acquiescence in his reply. The friendship between Schiller and Schwan, however, still continued, and the remembrance of Margaret never wholly faded from Schiller's heart. "Like all noble and manly natures," says Madame von Wolzogen, "Schiller ever retained an affectionate remembrance of the woman who had inspired him with tender emotion. These recollections moved him always, but he rarely spoke of them; for love with him was always earnest and solemn; not the sensual and fickle boy, but the young Divinity, — who unites himself with Psyche."

Perhaps, to dissipate his disappointment by new change, Schiller yielded to the invitation of friends he had secured at Dresden, and at the end of the summer he repaired to that city, and made a home in the house of Körner, lately appointed Councillor of Appeals* (*Appellations-Rath*), and newly mar-

* Father to the poet, Theodor Körner.

ried to Minna Stock, an enthusiastic admirer of Schiller.*

Körner's house was placed on the banks of the Elbe, near Loschwitz. A summer-house in the garden, surrounded by vineyards and pine-woods, was soon surrendered to the Poet, and became his favourite retreat. Here 'Don Carlos' made effective, though not rapid progress. This Tragedy, the first (as we have before observed) in which Schiller superadded the purer form and the more refined delineations of Poetry to the vigour and effect of the Drama, put the seal upon his fame. Hitherto, with all the admiration of the many, he had not won to himself that more durable, that more enviable reputation, which is maintained and confirmed by the graver few. But judges, the most critical and refined, shared for 'Don Carlos,' in the closet, the enthusiasm it excited on the stage.

But, while engaged in the completion of this Drama, Schiller's prodigious activity had already extended the realm his genius was destined to subdue and overspread. Besides the sketch of a Play — 'The Misanthrope' — never finished, he conceived the idea of his Romance, called 'The Ghost Seer,' and collected materials for the historical works he began to meditate. For History, indeed, his mind was already prepared by the earnest and thoughtful study of character, and of the philosophy of events, which had been brought to bear on 'Don Carlos.' And now this restless and ever-inquiring mind arrived at that stage in which, between the enthusiasm of youth, and the

* Minna Stock was one of the young ladies who had honoured Schiller with their miniatures.

wisdom of manhood, is so often placed the transition-interval of Doubt. That intensity of religious faith and conviction which had characterised his boyhood, had, perhaps, been somewhat roughly shaken by the hard bigotry of his teachers at the Stuttgart Academy; but there is evidence to show that it existed during the composition of 'The Robbers.' Amongst his earlier Poems is one called 'Letter from Julius to Raphael, from an unpublished Romance.' This Romance afterwards took the shape and title of 'Philosophical Letters between Julius and Raphael,' of which only a fragment was printed, but in which the scepticism of the Author is first apparent. There is no doubt that this work was remodelled and rewritten during Schiller's sojourn at Dresden, and no reason to suppose that, in its earlier form, it contained the matter for just offence, subsequently admitted.

In these letters appears a crude and wavering conflict between Spinozism and Kantism. With Kant's great work on 'Pure Reason,' Schiller seems to have been first acquainted, but only by hearsay, at Leipsic or Dresden, between 1785-87. It was not till some years afterwards, in 1791, that he studied Kant at the fountain-head, and learned from him, if not a precisely orthodox Christianity, at least that æsthetical form of religion to which the great German has led so many, who would otherwise have been lost in the pathless wilds of infidelity. But now, much that Schiller composed, shows the doubt and conflict of his mind — a state, to one so constitutionally devout, of great anguish and despondency, and to which, in his later writings, he has many solemn and pathetic allusions. In the 'Philosophical Letters' is to be found the

illogical yet brilliant fallacy of Pantheism, which bewildered hopelessly the more erratic intellect of Shelley, but which did not long delude the robust understanding of Schiller. In the Poems which he composed at this time, denominated by critics the Second Period of Schiller, the conflict is visible, though subdued. It was in conformity with this state of mind that Schiller — in whom the intellect was no less strong than the imagination — should turn to that positive and actual Something which is found in the external history of man. Plans too large for one writer to accomplish, hovered before his ambition — some history that might be to practical narrative what the vast conception of Herder suggested to the theory in which history should be told.

He meditated, and, in part, undertook, what, indeed, if ever accomplished suitably, would be one of the greatest records in the world — 'A History of all the more remarkable Conspiracies and Revolutions of Modern Times.' Meanwhile, his private life had at once its charms and its sorrows. The love of solitude still clung to him. He was seen in the morning, wandering along the banks of the Elbe, thoughtful and alone; or, like Byron at Venice, when the lightning flashed and the storm burst, tossed in his gondola upon the waves. He disliked, and sought to shun, miscellaneous, and especially what is called fashionable society; he carried his earnest mind, and his love of freedom, into all circles, — impatient of the talk that was frivolous, and the etiquette that was restrained. But he generally devoted some portion of the day to the interchange of mind with the congenial; — artists, men of letters, or even those who, simple and un-

affected, interested his heart, if they could not appeal to his intellect.

Shy and silent in the crowd, he was eloquent with those familiar to him, and his conversation was yet more charming from his simple kindliness, than from the stores which it displayed: this was the bright side of his private life, — the reverse of the medal is only darkly shadowed out. Before his visit to Dresden, Schiller had formed an acquaintance with a young woman named Sophy Albrecht, intended for the stage; he had taken a strong interest in her professional career, and he met her again at Dresden, as one of the most celebrated actresses of the day. He visited at her house on familiar terms, and there, one evening, after the play was over, he saw a young, blue-eyed stranger, who made upon him an impression equally deep and sudden. This girl was the eldest daughter of a Saxon widow, who lived upon a small pension, and whose husband had been an officer in the army. He afterwards encountered the fair Julia (such was the young lady's name) at the "Redoute," and ventured to accost her. The mother was, by all accounts, an artful and abandoned person, who did not scruple to put to profit the beauty of her daughter. She saw, in the admiration of so distinguished a poet, the means of widening Julia's already lucrative notoriety. Schiller was accordingly lured into an intimacy which occasioned the most serious anxiety to his friends.* It seems uncertain whether Julia, who appears to have followed her mother's depraved counsels with something of reluctant shame, returned the passion she had

* Döring, Madame von Wolzogen, Hoffmeister, Schwab.

inspired. There was that in Schiller to have won a worthier affection, despite the unflattering portrait which Sophy Albrecht, in her coarse taste of actress, has drawn of the young Poet.

Schiller, no doubt, at that time, and indeed from his entrance into youth, had lost the mere physical beauty which he seems to have possessed as a child, when his sister compared his countenance, shaded with locks of gold, "to an Angel's head." He was tall, extremely thin, though muscular, and large of bone; his neck was long (a noble defect, which is never without dignity), and his dress was rude and neglected. His face was not handsome, perhaps, in the eyes of actresses, — whose profession leads them to admire show and colour in all things, — but so noble a countenance has rarely been given to the sons of Genius; true, the complexion was pale, the cheeks somewhat hollow, and the dark auburn hair, though rich and profuse, had a deep tinge of red, but the forehead was lofty and massive, somewhat receding towards the temples when regarded in profile (a peculiarity found in most men of characters brave and determined). His eyes, described variously as blue, brown, and dark gray, and probably shifting in colour with the light,* were, though deep-sunken, singularly brilliant and expressive; and his nose, if too large for perfect symmetry of feature, was finely formed. His personal appearance, in short, harmonised with his intellectual character: and as, in Goethe, the pre-eminent attribute both of outward form and mental

* Madame von Wolzogen says their colour was undecided, between blue and light brown. His sister calls them blue: one of his College friends dark gray.

accomplishment was beauty;* so, in Schiller, the pre-eminent attribute in both was nobleness. If, as one who remembered him well declares, the colossal bust of Dannecker alone shows him as he really was in life, no one who has ever seen that likeness will deny, that it is a countenance which strikingly arrests the admiration, and deeply engrosses the interest — a certain grandeur, both of outline and expression, dwarfs into effeminacy whatever portraits of more justly proportioned beauty may be placed beside it. But the actress, describing Schiller at this time, could see only, as was natural to such an observer, the gray, threadbare frock — the general disdain of the toilette — the awkwardness given by pride and reserve to the movements of the tall figure — the indulgence of Spanish snuff — and the stoop of the "ever-thoughtful head".. Whether or not the fair Julia regarded Schiller with the same

* Goethe was, perhaps, the handsomest poet of whom we have any record. With a beauty of face not inferior to that of Milton or Byron, he had advantages of stature denied to either, — and that air of majestic dignity which is beauty in itself. We remember being very much struck with a comparison between two portraits of Byron and Goethe, taken when each was about the same age, viz. twenty-one. There was a strong likeness between the two, though Goethe's features, not less symmetrical, were larger and more manly: but the contrast in the expression was startling. The German lady who showed us the portraits, observed with truth, — "What dejection and discontent with the world is already stamped on Lord Byron's face! — What calm, yet sanguine energy — what hopeful self-confidence in Goethe's!" The several expression in either countenance seemed almost like a prophecy of either fate.

eyes as the actress is a matter, however, of very little importance: — not so the love felt by Schiller, since it not only gave rise to some of his poems, but coloured many immortal pages in the 'Ghost-seer.' His friends did their best to dispel his infatuation, and tear him from a connexion which they considered disgraceful to his name, ruinous to his means, and injurious to his prospects; finally, they succeeded in their appeals. He appears, indeed, to have become aware of the treachery* practised on him; and, after many a struggle between reason and passion, at last he tore himself away.

He had long meditated a journey to Weimar — then to Germany what Athens, in the time of Pericles, was to Greece; he now accepted a cordial invitation from a friend of his, Madame** von Kalb; and, in the month of July, 1787, he arrived at the little Court, brightened by a constellation of Art and Genius, before which the wealth and splendour of every capital in Europe was, at that day, but as foil and tinsel.

* Julia had directed Schiller not to enter the house when a light was to be seen in a certain chamber, upon pretence of being then engaged in the domestic circle, while in truth she was receiving some more favoured admirer.

** We have preferred (in this, and other instances), as more familiar to the English ear, the title of *Madame* to that of *Frau*, which is of course more rigidly correct.

CHAPTER VIII.

Society at Weimar — Character of the Duchess Amelia — The von Lengefelds — Schiller in the retirement of Rudolstadt — First meeting with Goethe — Study of Greek — Death of Madame von Wolzogen — Schiller accepts the Professorship of History at Jena — Life at that University — Courtship of Charlotte von Lengefeld — Schiller's marriage.

GOETHE was absent from Weimar, — in "those fair Ausonian climates," the influence of which so powerfully affected his plastic genius, and served to give to his after-creations that severe and statue-like repose which has, with all the beauty, something of the coldness and the terror, of Medusa: — Goethe was absent; but at Weimar were Herder, Wieland, Böttiger, and other eminent men. Schiller was not disappointed in the charm of the place. "I think here," he writes, "at least in the territory of Weimar, to end my days — and at last, once more, to find a country." And yet Schiller was not at first fully appreciated at the court to which he was admitted. The Augustan character which Weimar had obtained, originated in the tastes and the talents of Amelia, mother to the reigning Duke. Her especial favourite was the polished and graceful Wieland, whom she had appointed tutor to her son, Karl August. She had been left a widow at the age of nineteen; and fulfilled the duties of Regent during the minority of the young Prince. 1787.

To considerable talents for public business, and in-

tuitive knowledge of the world, this remarkable woman added a strong affection for art; and blended a thorough enjoyment of society with a keen thirst for knowledge. She acquired some acquaintance with the learned languages from Wieland, and translated Propertius. The circle of eminent men that she drew around her was attracted no less by her manners than her information and her abilities. But Schiller's genius, as yet made manifest, was not very congenial to a taste half French and half classical; and the Duchess-Mother does not seem to have been aware that in the rude strength of the young Suabian Germany had secured a classic author of her own.* Of all the literary men then at Weimar, the amiable Wieland was the most cordial to Schiller. Herder welcomed him, "but without warmth." Not till a much later period does the Duke himself appear to have taken any very vivid interest in his great visitor. The style of conversation, though intellectual and refined, was not that which Schiller was likely to enjoy — it was too critical, and perhaps too courtly — "more was babbled than was thought." But nothing is more beneficial to a man of genius, yet young, than to frequent society in which he is not over-estimated; — nothing more injurious than to be the sole oracle of his circle. From that period we date a purer and more dignified taste in Schiller — the tone of good society henceforth entered into his writings, and improved his manners: without weakening the one, it brought ease; without marring the simplicity of the other, it served to soften and make social.

* Schiller attributes to the good offices of Goethe (despite *his absence*) the access to the Duchess Amelia.

At the end of October, Schiller made an excursion to Meiningen, on a visit to his eldest sister, who had lately married Reinwald. Madame von Wolzogen was also at Meiningen; at her house he found his old college friend, Wilhelm; and, with this companion he returned towards Weimar. They took the journey on horseback, and proposed by the way to visit some relations of M. von Wolzogen — a memorable visit; for now Schiller approached that bright period of his life when his wanderings and apprenticeship of mind and heart were alike to cease — when his genius settled into art — when his affections were concentered in a home.

At Rudolstadt, on the banks of "the soft winding Saale," in a valley bounded by blue mountains and sloping woodlands, lived a Madame von Lengefeld, with two daughters; the elder, Caroline, married to M. von Beulwitz, Hofrath of Rudolstadt, to whom (more distinguished by the name she acquired in a second marriage, von Wolzogen) we are indebted for a delightful, though somewhat high-flown Biography of Schiller; and the younger, Charlotte, unmarried, and then in her twenty-first year. The father had died when the children had severally arrived at the ages of thirteen and ten. Till that time they had been brought up in close retirement. But a situation at the Court of Weimar being destined for Charlotte when she should arrive at a fitting age, Madame von Lengefeld deemed it advisable to remove for a short time into Switzerland, as affording better facilities for the kind of education necessary for a girl intended to mix in the society of a brilliant and polished court. Three years before the date on which we now enter,

the two sisters, who were related to the Wolzogens, had seen Schiller for the first time at Mannheim, and been favourably struck by his appearance. Madame von Lengefeld was then on her return from Switzerland; and the marriage of her elder daughter to M. von Beulwitz, served to settle her residence at Rudolstadt. The younger daughter, Charlotte, was highly prepossessing both in form and face. To borrow the description of her sister, "the expression of the purest goodness of heart animated her features; and her eye beamed only truth and innocence." She had a talent for landscape-drawing, and wrote poetry with grace and feeling. But above all, she had sympathy with whatever, in others, was noble in character, or elevated in genius; — her temper was sweet, and her disposition affectionate, faithful, and sincere.

At that time, however, Charlotte von Lengefeld was suffering under the melancholy which succeeds to the first fair illusions of life. Her early affections had been given to one from whom Fate had divided her. Her lover was in the army, and his duties called him to a distant part of the globe. Whether there were other obstacles, besides those of the young man's precarious profession, does not appear clear; but the family were opposed to the connection, and Charlotte von Lengefeld obeyed their wishes in struggling against the inclination she had formed.

Nothing could be more solitary and remote than the little valley in which the Lengefelds dwelt. No high-road intersected it: a stranger was a phenomenon. The appearance of two horsemen along the straggling street, one dark November evening, sufficed to create *curiosity* and interest. One of the riders, as he pre-

sented himself to the Lengefelds, playfully concealed his face in his mantle, but the ladies recognised their cousin, Wilhelm von Wolzogen. The other was unknown or unremembered, till his companion announced the already famous name of Schiller. The simple and shy Suabian, usually distant with strangers, found himself at home at once in the family circle he had entered. The conversation fell on his recent publication, 'The Philosophical Letters,' and on his earlier poems. The earnest Schiller wished the Lengefelds to become acquainted with his 'Carlos.' A single evening sufficed to form an intimacy. On his departure, Schiller had already conceived the project of spending the next summer at Rudolstadt. 1787.

It so chanced that Wilhelm von Wolzogen had, from the early period of his student life at Stuttgart, cherished a romantic attachment to his fair cousin, Caroline von Lengefeld — now Madame von Beulwitz. Her marriage was not happy, and her health was delicate and infirm. Perhaps these circumstances served to confirm in Wolzogen an affection that then seemed hopeless, and was only nursed in secret. But as the two friends rode to Weimar, there was no doubt much in Wolzogen's conversation that found an echo in Schiller's breast. An impression more deep, and yet more calm, than woman had hitherto made upon him, recalled to the poet, amidst the distractions of Weimar and the labour of his occupations, the image of the soft and pensive Charlotte. Fortune smiled upon the dawn of this affection. Charlotte came to Weimar that very winter, on a visit to Madame von Stein, a friend of her family, and Schiller met her in the

society of the place, but not frequently. Still he contrived to approach her, as nearly as his delicacy and the consciousness of his precarious worldly circumstances would allow to his pride. He supplied her occasionally with his favourite authors; she undertook the commission to find him a lodging at Rudolstadt for the summer. Occasion was thus found for the interchange of notes. On his part the correspondence was frank, but respectful; it proclaimed friendship and esteem — it did not betray more. "There breathes," in these letters, says an eloquent biographer, "a noble, mild, discreet inclination, without a trace of passion;" — and here the writer we quote adds finely, "Our love is generally the effigy of the one we love. Schiller's present love was the gold, purified from the sensual passion which had mastered him at Dresden." It seems probable, however, that in neither was the memory of the previous love yet effaced: and this, while it served to invest their feeling for each other with a certain tranquillity, allowed them both more sensibly to perceive the remarkable congeniality between their minds, tastes, and tempers. Thus, as it were, the soul began to love, before the heart was thoroughly moved. Schiller's fame, and his somewhat graver years, permitted him to assume with his young friend a certain tone of warning and advice. That court life, to which she seemed then destined, was opposed to all his ideas of true dignity and pure happiness. And, in the lines closing the second division of his poems, he expresses, in verse, the ideas often repeated in his correspondence.*

* 'Lines to a Female Friend, written in her Album.'

In the midst of May, the following year, we find Schiller settled in the valley of Rudolstadt. 1788.
He lodged in a house, half-an-hour's walk from the town,* and his chamber overlooked the banks of the Saale, flowing through meadows, and under the shade of venerable trees. There, on the opposite side of the river rose a hill, clothed with woods, at the foot of which lay tranquil villages; — there, high above the landscape, towered the castle of Rudolstadt. A small monument, crowned with a bronze copy of Dannecker's bust of Schiller, yet commemorates his sojourn in this happy valley, recalling Goethe's lovely words —

"The place that a good man has trod, remains hallowed to all time."**

It is thus that the elder sister speaks of those days — the fairest, perhaps, in the life of Schiller: — "How welcome was it, after some tedious visit,*** to see our genial friend approaching, beneath the fair trees that skirt the banks of the Saale! A forest brook, that pours itself into that river, and was crossed by a little bridge, was the meeting-place at which we awaited. When we beheld him in the twilight, coming towards us, a serener, an ideal, life entered within us; a lofty earnestness, and the graceful ease of a mind pure and candid, ever animated Schiller's conversation. One seemed, as one heard him talk, to wander as it were

* In the village of Volkstädt.
** Hoffmeister.
*** '*Kaffee-Visite*' — Coffee visit: we should say Tea party.

between the immutable stars of heaven, and yet amidst the flowers of earth."

But Schiller, during this holiday of existence, was not idle in that solemn vocation of Author — of Instructor — of High Priest in Literature — to which he was sworn. His evenings were devoted to Charlotte and her family, his mornings to study. Here he laboured at his 'History of the Revolt of the Netherlands' — at the correction of the tale so well known in England, 'The Ghost Seer,' — here were concluded his 'Letters upon Don Carlos' — and here was composed the first portion of the finest Poem written at this period of his life, 'The Artists.' In the house of the Lengefelds, Schiller too, for the first time, met Goethe, on his return from Italy. With the works of Schiller hitherto published, Goethe had no sympathy; they contradicted his own theories of art, and they revolted his serene taste. His manner to the Suabian was reserved and cold; the pride of Schiller forbade him to make the first advances; and though, as he wrote word to his friend Körner, the great idea he had formed of Goethe was not lessened by this first personal contact, he doubted if they could ever come into close communication. "Much which is yet interesting to me — that which I yet wish and hope for — has had its epoch for him. His whole being is, from its origin, constructed differently from mine; his world is not my world; our modes of conceiving things are essentially different: from such a combination, no secure substantial intimacy can result. Time will try."*

* Correspondence with Körner: Carlyle's 'Life of Schiller.

About this time, at the instigation of the friendly and learned Wieland, Schiller turned his attention to the literature of Greece, with which he had hitherto but a very slight and superficial acquaintance. Nothing ever produces a more durable influence upon an author's genius, than the deliberate and systematic recurrence to Hellenic Poetry and Letters. Studied too early, they may often correct the taste at the expense of the fancy; but, studied with the mature thought of manhood, they only strengthen by purifying the inventive faculties. From that time Schiller began to comprehend true art, the vivifier of nature. From that time he became *an Artist.* Homer first engrossed his reverent delight; he passed to the Greek Tragedians; and the character of his mind, which inclined to philosophy, and the tendency of his genius, which was essentially pathetic and humane, rendered ample justice to the still wronged Euripides.*

From these new sources of inspiration came his noble Poem on the 'Gods of Greece,' and the classical perfection to which he brought 'The Artists,' before begun. The former of these Poems, which appeared in the 'Mercury,' superintended by Wieland, occasioned much offence to those who sought orthodoxy, even in the wildest dreams of the Poet. Although Schiller's mind at that time was certainly still unsettled, he yet grieved at an interpretation which he appears not to have foreseen; and at a subsequent period, he sacrificed

* We must not, however, suppose that Schiller ever attained to the facility of a *scholar* in Greek. . . In translating Euripides, he had constant need of the Latin version, and even the French of Brumoy.

many of his most brilliant stanzas, in order to purify the whole from whatsoever sincere and liberal piety could reasonably revolt at or regret. The remarkable frankness of his genius often, it is true, led him to depict or to imply his own struggles, and his own errors; but, in his stormiest interval of doubt, Schiller never contemplated the dangerous and dark ambition of unsettling the religious convictions of others.

Charlotte's admiration of 'The Artists' greatly and seasonably served to cement the affection now ripening daily between them.* In fact, that fine poem no vulgar mind could really relish and admire. In one whom so elevated an appeal to the intellectual faculties could move and animate, a lover might well behold the true companion of a poet's life, the true sympathiser in a poet's labours.

This summer, otherwise so happy, was however darkened by the death of Madame von Wolzogen — Schiller's earliest protectress and second mother. He felt this affliction most deeply — his letter to her son, still extant, is full of tender grief and delicate consolation.

In November, Schiller returned to Weimar, and occupied himself with the conclusion of his 'Ghost Seer,' and translations from Euripides. His chief relaxation and luxury were in his letters to Charlotte — letters unequalled in their combination of manly tenderness, confiding frankness, and refined yet unexaggerated romance; still, though they now betrayed his own love, they did not formally hazard a declaration, or press for a return.

* Madame von Wolzogen.

But early in the following year he was called to a new and more active career. Considerable portions of his history of the 'Revolt of the Netherlands' had already appeared in Wieland's 'Mercury,' and excited considerable sensation. His friends wished to see him in one of those honourable situations, which, to the credit of Germany, afford shelter and independence to so numerous and brilliant a host of literary men. Goethe (though still not intimate with Schiller) displayed the calm magnanimity towards a rival natural to one in whom meanness was impossible, and employed the interest of his rank and his fame on behalf of the young historian. Schiller was finally summoned to take the chair of Historical Professor at the University of Jena. It was not without modest reluctance, and a sense of his own deficiencies in the details of history, that he undertook this office. His reception was such as might be anticipated — Four hundred students crowded to the Lecture-room — their presence and applause animated him — and his voice, naturally not strong, filled the Hall. 1789. Ætat. 30.

Amongst the German youth of this day, Schiller is the favourite; he was then, says Hoffmeister, "the idol." His very defects as a Lecturer were not those on which young men would be severe or discriminating critics. Through the fire and the vigour which animated his language and his delivery, his ardent listeners were not likely to detect that redundant rhetoric, in which genius is too apt to conceal deficient information. He came too fresh to his task. He was acquiring one day, the knowledge he imparted the next. His facts had not

been sufficiently meditated, nor his views sufficiently sobered down.

The society of Jena was more congenial to Schiller than that of Weimar — here nothing was courtly and restrained; here manners were diversified and opinions uncontrolled. To this illustrious University flocked the Professors and the Students from so many quarters, that each part of Germany found its representatives. The streets swarmed with all varieties of costume; the halls resounded with all differences of dialect. From the coarsest manners to the most super-refined; from the most limited information and the narrowest prejudice, to the profoundest wisdom — to the most liberal knowledge of the world; all forms of intellect were here mixed and confounded. What a school for a man, who had yet to complete his education by the study of his kind — not in books, but in actual life! The true poet must divide his existence between solitude and the crowd.

Schiller's correspondence with Charlotte continued; and his chivalrous devotion, the habitual intercourse with his noble and beautiful nature, had produced, at last, its full effect upon his young admirer. The old affection was effaced — the new affection confirmed. Charlotte owned to her sister, "that she had so lived in Schiller — he had so contributed to the formation of her mind, and to her happiness — that it seemed to her impossible to separate her lot from his."

The sisters were now staying at Lauchstädt: thither Schiller (escaping from Jena) visited them; a full explanation of what indeed must have been long since clear to both hearts, took place. Charlotte confessed

that the love she had inspired was not unreturned, and promised, one day or other, to become his wife. True, as yet, it was hope deferred, — the fortunes of Schiller were still to be confirmed — the consent of Madame von Lengefeld still to be obtained. But it was enough for the present to feel that love was won. "How different," thus writes Schiller himself to Charlotte, on his return to Jena — "how different is all around me now, since in each step of my life thine image meets me: like a halo thy love hovers over me; like a fair mist does it clothe the face of Nature. I return from a walk: in the vast space of Nature, as in my lonely chamber, it is ever the selfsame atmosphere in which I move; and the fairest landscape serves but for the fairer mirror of one ever-enduring image. The remembrance of thee leads me back to the All; the All reminds me, in turn, of thee. Never so freely and so boldly could I traverse, in my enthusiasm, through the world of Thought as now that my soul has found a possession — a home; and no longer incurs the danger to lose itself in its wanderings: I know where again to find myself — in thee!"

At last came the long-yearned-for holidays. Schiller was released from his task; he fled back to the neighbourhood of Rudolstadt; he occupied his old chamber; he lived back his old life, — but in the brighter air of hope assured and of love returned. As yet, however, the lovers could only hold unwitnessed interviews by stealth; and to this date we must refer the exquisite love poems of the 'Mystery' and the 'Assignation.' At last, but not till after long and severe probation, Schiller's hopes were crowned. After the failure of various schemes and projects, he obtained from the

Duke of Saxe Weimar an appointment as Professor Extraordinary, with a salary of 200 rix dollars; and he now boldly applied to Madame von Lengefeld for the hand of her daughter. His suit was supported with zeal and earnestness by Madame von Stein, who had great influence with Madame von Lengefeld, and by M. von Dalberg,* elder brother to the Superintendent of the Mannheim stage, a nobleman of the highest rank, and the most admirable character. Madame von Lengefeld was moved by these instances; her prejudices gave way before the happiness of her daughter and the distinction of the suitor.

The title of Hofrath, conferred on Schiller by the Court of Meiningen, in the beginning of 1790, perhaps served yet more to content the good lady with her daughter's choice; and on the 20th February, 1790, after an intimate acquaintance of three years, the lovers were united.

1790.

Never was marriage, if we except only the narrowness of pecuniary circumstances, formed under more favourable auspices. The very age of the parties was that, in each, in which affection promises to be most durable, and the choice best considered. Schiller was about one-and-thirty, Charlotte about four-and-twenty: the length of the courtship had but served to found attachment upon esteem, while it augmented it by delay. The characters of bride and bridegroom were

* Often confounded with Wolfgang von Dalberg, the Mannheim Baron; but an infinitely better person. It was to the elder brother that Schiller addressed the verses which accompanied the copy of 'William Tell;' not, as Mr. Carlyle supposes, to Wolfgang, who deserved no such honour.

in the most perfect harmony; where they differed, it was but for each to improve the other; the refinement of the woman softened the impetuous man; the noble fire of the man warmed and elevated the gentle woman. Schiller was now really formed for the home he had so long sighed for. With all that depth of feeling and singleness of heart which are common to those fond of solitude, he now combined much which intercourse with mankind alone can give. As all misanthropy had fled from his heart, so all cynicism was now banished from his manners and his dress. He could no longer have been open to the caricature of the Dresden actress; and, independently of his fame, his genius, and his noble heart, a vainer woman than Charlotte von Lengefeld might have been proud of her choice.

CHAPTER IX.

Schiller's illness — The sensation produced in Denmark by the report of his death — The letter addressed to him by the Prince von Holstein Augustenburg, and Count von Schimmelmann — Schiller's reply — His study of Kant — Schiller revisits his native land.

Schiller was not disappointed in the hopes he had formed of domestic happiness. A few months after his marriage he exclaims in his correspondence: "Life is quite a different thing by the side of a beloved wife, than so forsaken and alone — even in summer. . . . The world again clothes itself around me in poetic forms; old feelings are again awakening in my breast. . . . Fate has conquered the difficulties for me. From the future I expect everything. . . I think my very youth will be renewed, an inward poetic life will give it me again."* But, alas! even as these lines were written, that bodily enemy for which the mind so rarely pre-
1791. pares itself was at hand. Disease struck root into a constitution always delicate; he was attacked with a disorder in the chest; and though he recovered from its immediate severity, the head of the shaft was left behind. He never entirely recovered his health — from that time consumption rankled within.

He had been labouring more intensely than ever:

* Extracted from the translation in Carlyle's 'Life.'

to such a man, the consciousness that on his toils rested the worldly comforts of a wife who had resigned a Court for a scholar's roof stimulated industry into fever. He was immersed in severe studies connected with the historical pursuits to which he was now devoted, but the first and most peremptory injunction of his physician was repose to his intellect. . . . . Repose — and his very subsistence rested on activity! At this crisis, however, one of those rare acts of munificence which are the godlike prerogatives of wealth, came to brighten poverty and comfort genius. A report of Schiller's death had been spread abroad: it had reached Denmark, at the moment when a princely circle of the Poet's admirers had resolved to repair to Hellebeck, near Copenhagen, and, amidst its sublime and enchanting scenery, to hold a court in his honour, and chant his 'Hymn to Joy.' Amongst these were the Danish Poet, Baggesen; the Count Ernest von Schimmelmann; the Prince Christian von Holstein Augustenburg and his Princess. Their grief, as enthusiastic as their admiration, changed the meditated festivities into a funeral solemnity.

They met at Hellebeck, on the shore of the sea, opposite the high rocks of Sweden, and Baggesen began to read the hymn. Clarinets, horns, and flutes chimed in to the song of the chorus; two additional stanzas, in honour of the supposed dead, were chanted, and may be thus translated: —

"Hail to a friend, O choir of friends!
The dead we love shall live once more;
Bright to the bowers of heaven ascends
His soul: our lives it hovers o'er.

Chorus. — Lift your attesting hands on high;
Swear by this wine from lands made free,*
Till found once more in yonder sky,
Faith to our brother's memory."

As the song ceased, all eyes wept.

Homage to the dead is a vulgar and idle tribute, if it come after neglect or injury to the living. The heart sickens at that mockery of admiration, which allowed Spenser to die of a broken heart, and threw copies of verses into his grave, — which suffered political vengeance to reduce Dryden to a bookseller's drudge, and insisted on burying his dust in the sepulchre of kings. To Schiller's biographers belongs the pleasing task of commemorating the only true homage ever rendered to a dead poet, — simply because the poet was *not* dead! No sooner was the report confuted, than the noble mourners exulted to exchange ceremonial honours to the lifeless, for practical benefits to the living. A letter, from which we extract the purport, was sent to Schiller by the Prince von Augustenburg and Count Schimmelmann.

"27*th Nov.* 1791.

"Two friends, united through the citizenship of the world, send this letter to you — noble man! Both are unknown to you — both love you and revere. They find in your recent works the mind and the enthusiasm which knit the bond of their own friendship; by the perusal of these works they accustom themselves to regard the author as a member of their own union. Great was their grief at the report of his

* *i. e.* French wine.

death; their tears were not the scantiest of those which flowed from all good men by whom he was known and loved. The lively interest with which you have inspired us must excuse us from the appearance of officious importunity. They tell us that your health suffers from too severe an application, and needs for some time an entire repose. This repose your pecuniary circumstances alone forbid you to enjoy. Will you grudge us the delight of contributing to your relief? We entreat you to receive, for three years, an annual gift of a thousand dollars."* The writers proceed with dignity to touch upon their rank, and to imply a delicate hope that it may not prove an obstacle to their request; — they desire not to wound his spirit of independence, or parade the ostentation of patronage. "We know no pride but this, — to be men! — citizens in that great Republic whose boundaries extend beyond single generations — beyond the limits of earth itself." They proceed to invite him into Denmark: "For we are not the only ones here who know and love you; and if, after the restoration of your health, you desire to enter into the service of our state, it would be easy for us to gratify such an inclination. Yet think us not so selfish as to make such a change in your residence a condition: we leave our suggestion to your free choice; we desire to preserve to Humanity its instructor, and to this desire every other consideration is subordinate."

There may be in this letter — which the gratitude of Literature should render no less imperishable than

* A sum which, at Weimar, would go perhaps three times as far as it would in England.

the works of him to whom it is addressed — something of the romantic exaggeration, in tone and phrase, which betrays the influence of the French cosmopolites; but that influence here affected men of noble hearts, who desired to have an excuse in philanthropy for individual beneficence; not, as with the maudlin confraternities of France, an excuse, in the citizenship of the world, from doing good to a single creature!

The effect such a letter produced on Schiller no one can describe — every one can imagine. Nothing but the declaration of his physicians that a visit to so northern a climate would be fatal, prevented him from hurrying to benefactors so delicate and so munificent. In a letter to Baggesen, the depth and manliness of his gratitude are apparent; and this letter is the more interesting, inasmuch as it expresses those views of the dignity of letters, and that repugnance to regard art as a *livelihood*, which may serve the ambition of youthful genius at once with warning and emulation.

"From the cradle of my intellect till now," writes Schiller, "have I struggled with Fate; and since I knew how to prize intellectual liberty, I have been condemned to want it. A rash step, ten years since, divided me from every other practical livelihood, but that of a writer. I had given myself to this calling before I had made proof of its demands, or surveyed its difficulties. The necessity of pursuing it befel me before I was fitted for it by knowledge and intellectual maturity. That I felt this — that I did not bound my ideal of an author's duty to those narrow limits within which I was confined — I recognise as a favour of Heaven. As unripe, and far below that ideal which

lived within me, I beheld all which I gave to the world." With feeling and with modesty Schiller proceeded to enlarge upon the conflict between his circumstances and his aspirations, to touch upon the melancholy with which he was saddened by the contemplation of the great masterpieces of art, ripened only to their perfection by that happy leisure denied to him. "What had I not given," he exclaims, "for two or three tranquil years; that, free from all the toils of an author, I could render myself only to the study, the cultivation of my conception, — the ripening of my ideal!" He proceeds to observe that in the German literary world, a man could not unite the labour for subsistence with fitting obedience to the demands of lofty art; that for ten years he had struggled to unite both; and that the attempt to make the union only in some measure possible, had cost him his health .... "In a moment when life began to display its whole value — when I was about to knit a gentle and eternal bond between the reason and the phantasy — when I girded myself to a new enterprise in the service of art, death drew near. This danger indeed passed away; but I waked only to an altered life, to renew, with slackened strength and diminished hopes, my war with Fate. So the letter received from Denmark found me! I attain at last the intellectual liberty so long and so eagerly desired. I win leisure, and through leisure I may perhaps recover my lost health; if not, at least for the future, the trouble of my mind will not give nourishment to disease. If my lot does not permit me to confer beneficence in the same manner as my benefactors, at least I will seek it where alone it is in my power, — and make that seed which they scatter, un-

fold itself in me, to a fairer blossom for humanity." And he did so!

Thus enabled to enrich while he relaxed his mind, Schiller devoted himself with ardour to the study of Kant.* With the closer knowledge of this philosopher — who, whatever his defects, certainly did more than any other reasoner to counteract the hard and narrow scepticism of the French Encyclopædists, — to bring imagination to the aid of Faith, and at once to enlarge the tolerance of the sectarian and to calm the doubts of the seeker — really commences the Third Period of Schiller's intellectual career, though his biographers postpone its date to the time when its fruits became practically apparent.

In June 1792, Schiller and his wife visited Körner at Dresden: On their return, they received Schiller's mother and youngest sister, Nannette, whom he had not seen for eight years. The tender associations thus revived led the mind of the exile back to his Suabian home. In August 1793, the Schillers, therefore, commenced an excursion to the Poet's father-land.** At Heidelberg, Schiller met

1792.

* Conz, Professor of Poetry and Eloquence at Tübingen, who visited Schiller in 1792, says that he was then thoroughly absorbed in Kant. Conz gives a charming picture of Schiller's simple and frugal life. "He was," says the Professor, "Humanity itself, and his excellent wife a pattern of complaisance and modesty."

** About this time Schiller's sister-in-law, according to the German law, annulled her marriage with M. von Beulwitz. She afterwards married Wilhelm von Wolzogen, attached to her, as we have before said, from his earliest youth. She also joined the Schillers at Heilbronn.

once more the object of his early love, Margaret Schwan, now like himself married to another; he saw her with a deep emotion, which his wife comprehended too well to resent; he who sees, unmoved, the one in whom he formerly garnered up his hopes of home, can never constitute the happiness of the home he has found with another.

At Heilbronn, unsurpassed, even in Germany, for the peculiar beauties of its landscape, the family of Schiller met the long-lost wanderer. 1793. He stood amongst them no longer a rude stripling, a penniless exile; — but the favourite of princes, the idol of a people — his hopes fulfilled — his destiny assured; crowned already with renown, and calm in the certainty of triumphs more splendid yet to come. He had reached the time when, without humiliation, he could humble himself to his native sovereign. With Schiller's wild love for liberty, he never was without that loyalty, which is almost inborn with the children of the North. He wrote to the Duke of Würtemberg such a letter as that loyalty might dictate; he received no direct reply, but was informed, privately, 'that the Duke would be ignorant of his movements if he re-entered Würtemberg.' Schiller then repaired to Ludwigsburg, where he was in the immediate neighbourhood of his father's house, and under the medical care of one of his early friends, von Hoven, now Court physician. Here he first enjoyed the happiness he had long coveted; he became a father. Sept. 14, 1793. His earnest, manly, and affectionate nature was precisely that which finds children at once a charge and a blessing. Now he would play for the hour to-

gether with his "Gold-son, his heart's Karl,"* as he named his firstborn; now shut himself up to study Quintilian, on the plan of education to be pursued.

Those who remembered the youth of Schiller were startled by the change which years and circumstance had effected; all that was sharp and hard in his character was gone. His early fire was softened — it warmed more and alarmed less; there was far greater grace in his demeanour. His ancient neglect of appearance and dress was replaced by a decent elegance; his even humour scarcely allowed them to recognise the impetuous and stormy stripling they had known ten years before.** But, alas! with the mental change had come the physical; the features were drawn and hollow, the complexion wan and haggard. Illness frequently confined him to his bed — Kant and Homer his companions; and at this time the grand outline of 'Wallenstein,' before chalked out, began to receive colour and fullness; he devoted himself to its composition principally at night, diversifying the poetical task with the first sketch of his 'Philosophical Essay upon Æsthetical Cultivation.'

During his residence at Ludwigsburg the Grand Duke Karl died.*** Schiller was asked by his father to

* Conz. Schwab. Hoffmeister.

** von Hoven, ap. Mad. von Wolzogen.

*** Biographers have raised a doubt if Schiller had removed from Heilbronn to Ludwigsburg before the Duke's death. But it seems quite clear that he was at Ludwigsburg early in September, since von Hoven, who resided at Ludwigsburg, attended his wife in her confinement, — Sept. 14th.

congratulate the Duke's successor in a poem — we need scarcely say that he refused. He could not seem to rejoice at the death of a man who had been both his benefactor and his persecutor. Schiller was never more himself than when, standing by his sovereign's grave, with von Hoven, he spoke thus touchingly: — "Here rests this once active restless man! He had great faults as a Prince, greater yet as an individual. But the first were overwhelmed by his high qualities, and the remembrance of the last must be buried with the dead. I say to thee, therefore, if thou hearest one speak of him disparagingly, as he lies there — trust that man *not!* — he is no good, at least, he is no noble man." Oct. 24, 1793.

At Ludwigsburg he formed an acquaintance with Cotta the bookseller, which had considerable influence on his later labours. In connection with this publisher, a new literary periodical, the 'Horen,' was chalked out, and a new political journal, intended to take the lead over all its German contemporaries. Of this last Schiller proposed to assume the editorship; but his growing disinclination for objects less noble than the art of which Philosophy had brought him clearer and sublimer views, induced him happily to resign this notion. The political journal was, however, set up by the publisher, and exists to-day in high repute, under the well-known name of the 'Allgemeine Zeitung.'

CHAPTER X.

THIRD PERIOD.

The Horen and Musenalmanach — Two deaths in Schiller's family — Return from philosophy to poetry — The summer-house — Influence of Goethe on Schiller's genius — Appearance of Wallenstein.

In May, 1794, Schiller returned to Jena, his body worn to a shadow;* his mind more than ever vigorous and resolved. Here he found the charm of a friendship more complete, and more sympathetic alike in intellect and in taste, than he had yet known Wilhelm von Humboldt had settled at Jena, with a charming wife, whom he had lately married; — the two families contracted the closest intimacy. The undertaking of the 'Horen' was now seriously commenced, as a monthly Periodical, with the assistance of the greatest names in Germany, — Goethe, Herder, Jacobi, Matthisson, &c. In this journal Schiller desired to consumate an idea which had long haunted him, and which had been but imperfectly developed in the 'Thalia.' It may be said that this idea had grown out of the vast and luminous humanity of Herder, and ripened under the influence to which Herder was most opposed — that of Kant. The journal was intended to merge all that belonged to sect, to party, and the day, and devote itself to all that could interest the common family of man; so far,

* Goethe thought, on seeing Schiller, that he had scarcely *a fortnight's* life in him. — Hoffmeister. Eckermann.

this was akin to Herder; but Schiller sought the interest, not in broad and popular topics, but in that æsthetical cultivation — that development of ideal beauty, which, since his study of Kant, he regarded as the flower and apex of human accomplishment. But the enterprise of this periodical, memorable in much, is so principally on account of the union it established between Goethe* and Schiller — an union inestimable to both, and therefore to the world. Hitherto, these eminent men had moved in separate orbits; and Goethe's calm kindness to his great rival had not advanced to intimacy; but now the friendship Goethe felt for Schiller's wife, whom he had known from her childhood; the ties formed by acquaintances in common; and that power of attracting others to his designs, which Goethe himself has remarked in Schiller; drew them closely together, and served to form a bond which death only could dissolve. Goethe says, with noble candour, in his correspondence, "I really know not what might have become of me, without the impulse received from Schiller;" — and he proceeds to enumerate the writings which had never been produced but for the co-operation of the only man from whom — had Goethe been one fraction less than Goethe — he would have been kept aloof by jealousy and alarm. Into this journal Schiller, appointed chief editor, poured some of the finest thoughts to be found in his prose writings; embodied in the form of philosophical criti-

* We need scarcely say that Goethe's fame and position had prodigiously increased since the publication of Schiller's 'Robbers.'

cism. Here too, and in the 'Musenalmanach,' an annual publication, also undertaken in conjunction with Goethe, somewhat later, appeared the immortal lyrics, which perhaps established the most popular and indisputable of Schiller's claims to admiration, purely and singly as the Poet. In this last periodical finally flashed fort those Epigrams, under the name of Xenien; sometimes personal and caustic, sometimes thoughtful and ideal, which set the literary world of Germany in a blaze. The connection between Goethe and Schiller had excited much jealous hostility amongst many lesser writers; an hostily wreaked upon the 'Horen,' and avenged in the 'Musenalmanach' by these laconic sarcasms. The sensation they excited was prodigious; though they can inspire but a lukewarm interest in the public of a foreign country.* Many of the more personal epigrams Schiller had the grace to withdraw from the subsequent collection of his poems; and in this withdrawal he could afford to sacrifice what critics have termed his best. In the midst of these labours

1796. he had the misfortune to lose his youngest sister, Nannette, a girl of promise and beauty; and in the same year, after a lingering disease, his

* Nevertheless, their effect upon German literature yet endures. Mr. Carlyle observes — ('Miscellanies,' vol. i. p. 67)— that "the war of all the few good heads in the nation with all the many bad ones, began in Schiller's Musenalmanach for 1767;" and adds that, "since the age of Luther, there has scarcely been seen such strife and stir in the intellect of Europe." We do not quite subscribe to Mr. Carlyle's admiration for "the new critical doctrine," which dates from the *Xenien*.

father. He felt both losses acutely; the last perhaps the most: but in his letters it pleases us to see the philosopher return to the old childlike faith in God, the reliance on Divine goodness for support in grief, the trust in Divine mercy for the life to come. For it has been remarked with justice that, while Schiller's *reason* is often troubled in regard to the fundamental truths of religion, his *heart* is always clear. The moment death strikes upon his affections, the phraseology of the schools vanishes from his lips — its cavils and scruples from his mind: and he comforts himself and his fellow-mourners with the simple lessons of Gospel resignation and Gospel hope.

About this period Schiller began to turn wearily from the studies which had for years occupied his intellect and influenced his genius. He felt that he had given himself too much to abstract speculation, too little to the free poetic impulse. "It is high time," he says, in a letter to Goethe, "that for a while I should close the Philosophy Shop." He returned with ardour to the grand outline of his 'Wallenstein,' commenced years ago; long suspended, never forgotten. He yearned for some escape from the learned and arid atmosphere around him, some quiet retreat in which he could be alone with his genius — a summer-house with a garden! At length, this modest desire which literally seemed to haunt him was realised. Not far from Jena, to the south-west of the town, he purchased a garden, and built himself a kind of pavilion, with a single chamber. The site commanded a wide and noble prospect. Placed on the brow of a hill, up which the garden climbed, the summer-house overlooked the valley of the Saale, and the hanging pines of a neighbour-

ing forest.* "There," says Goethe, in his Prologue to the 'Lay of the Bell' —

"There, deck'd he the fair garden watch-tower; whence
Listening he loved the voice of stars to hear,
Which to the no less ever-living sense
Made music, mystic, yet through mystery clear!"

Here then, in the summer months, did he devote himself, with a passion more fervent than in youth, to the divine faculty of creation. Often was the light seen at night streaming from the window, and the curious might even catch a glimpse of his tall shadowy figure walking to and fro the chamber; now halting to write down the verses which he first declaimed aloud, or to support the overstrained physical power with the fatal excitements, for which our own Byron had more excuse, and has found less mercy. It was his custom to have placed on the table not only strong coffee and chocolate, but champagne, and the far more irritating and pernicious wines of the Rhine. Thus would he labour the night through, till sleep, or rather exhaustion, came on at morning; and he never rose till late. Dearly purchased, indeed, was the luxury of these midnight watches; but who shall conceive their intense delight? Thus he speaks himself in his letter to Goethe, May, 1797, on his first occupation of his new abode: — I greet you from my garden, on which I entered this day: a fair landscape surrounds me; the sun goes gently down; and the nightingales begin their warbles.

* The house exists no more; upon its site is placed an urn *dedicated to* the memory of the poet. — *Doring.*

All around serves to render me serene; and my first evening in my own ground and soil is of the fairest omen!"

It happened, perhaps fortunately, that, in the summer of 1797, Wilhelm von Humboldt left Jena for Italy. The influence that this eminent but over-refining intellect had exercised on Schiller, had not been on the whole favourable to his poetical genius;* it had withdrawn him too much from the broad and popular field in which poetry, of the highest order and most extended empire, should seek its themes, into the 'Realm of Shadow,' — an obscure and metaphysical ideal. With the departure of Humboldt, a new and far happier direction was given to Schiller's eager energies. More delivered to the luminous influence of Goethe, he became more imbued with his art. A friendly emulation with Goethe led to the production of Schiller's greatest, though simplest poetical productions — his Ballads. Goethe had already shown what epic interest and what subtle wisdom might be given to this form of verse: Schiller caught the inspiration, and composed his 'Diver,' the sublimest ballad in the German language. This was followed by 'The Glove,' 'The Cranes of Ibycus,' &c. &c. The years 1797-98 were signalised by these performances, in which the ripest art of Goethe seems united with the earliest force of Schiller.

Meanwhile, 'Wallenstein' still, though slowly advanced to its elaborate completion. Schiller grudged

* W. v. Humboldt, who was a devoted Kantian, seems to have supposed that poetry should be a riddle. It is always in the Abstract that he searches for the Beautiful.

no pains, and neglected no study, which might serve to fulfil in this great work, that ideal of exellence, for the achievement of which the necessary leisure had been so desired. He plunged into the recesses of astrology and consulted the dreams of the Cabalists, in in order to treat with conscientious accuracy, and invest with solemn dignity, the favourite superstition of his hero.* Finally, in January 1799, after great preparation, the first portion of 'Wallenstein,' the 'Piccolomini,' was produced at Weimar. This was followed by the 'Death of Wallenstein,' in April. If on the boards the interest of these several parts of the great whole was not so intense as Schiller's earlier dramas, he was fortunate in the cordial support of the few who ultimately decide the judgment of the many: the perusal of the work, subsequently published entire, served to deepen and to widen general admiration: the more 'Wallenstein' was examined and discussed, the more its profound beauty grew upon the world. Long after its publication, Goethe compared it to a wine, which wins upon the taste in proportion to its age. "This work," says Tieck, "at once rich and profound, is a monument for all times, of which Germany may be proud; and a national feeling — a native sentiment — is reflected from this pure mirror, teaching us a greater sense of what we are, and what we were." In fact, from that time Schiller became the National Poet of all Germany.

1799. Ætat. 40.

* Schiller was fond, for their own sake, of such ultra-philosophical inquiries. When at Heilbronn, 1793, he took much interest in animal magnetism.

CHAPTER XI.

Residence at Weimar — Mary Stuart — Maid of Orleans — Bride of Messina — Reception at the Leipsic Theatre — Death of Schiller's mother — His life and habits — He is ennobled — Acquaintance with Madame de Staël.

In the same year, 1799, by the advice of his physicians, Schiller removed to Weimar; the Grand Duke awarded him a pension, of 1000 dollars, with a declaration that it should be doubled if illness should interfere with his other resources. His pecuniary circumstances were now competent to his moderate wants. 'Wallenstein' had brought him ample remuneration; the periodicals with which he was connected yielded a regular and liberal income. Nevertheless, his activity increased as the ruder necessities for exertion were diminished. Vast schemes were constantly before him. His genius itself became to him that spur which Poverty is to the genius of less earnest men. His play of 'Maria Stuart,' and 'The Lay of the Bell,' long premeditated, were his next productions; the last the greatest of his lyrics; the first the poorest of the dramas conceived in his riper years. To an Englishman nothing can be less satisfactory than Schiller's character of our great Elizabeth; and history is violated for insufficient causes, and from an indistinct and imperfect ideal. Madame de Staël thought more highly of the tragedy than it deserved, precisely because of its defects. The Mary and the Elizabeth of Schiller have much of the

shallowness and the tinsel of French heroines.* The public for once judged accurately in admiring the scattered beauties of the piece, and condemning it as a whole. But sickness of body may perhaps have conduced to the faults of this play. After Schiller's death, this note, in his handwriting, was found: "The year 1800 I was very ill. Amidst pain was 'Mary Stuart' completed." But from this single fall Schiller's genius recovered itself with the bound of a Titan. The lovely image of the 'Maid of Orleans' haunted him. Already, with the commencement of the new year, 1801, three acts of this masterpiece of elevated romance were composed. In the autumn of the same year, during a visit to his friend Körner at Dresden, he laboured at the no less magnificent 'Bride of Messina,' unequalled as a lyrical tragedy. From Dresden he went to Leipsic, and was present at the performance of the 'Maid of Orleans.' Here one of those signal triumphs, which so rarely await living genius, awaited him. Scarce had the drop-scene fallen on the first act, than the house resounded with the cry, "*Es lebe Friedrich Schiller!*" The cry was swelled by all the force of the orchestra. After the performance the whole crowd collected in the broad place before the theatre to behold the Poet. Every head was bared as he passed along; while men lifted their children in their arms, to show the pride of Germany to the new generation — crying out, "*Dieser ist es*" — "That is he!"

* A. W. Schlegel, nevertheless, preferred, or affected to prefer, in many important respects, the 'Maria Stuart' to the 'Wallenstein.'

From Leipsic Schiller returned to Weimar, where 'The Maid of Orleans' soon found its way to the boards; but its most gorgeous representation was at Berlin, where the New Theatre commenced with its performance on a scale of grandeur unprecedented on the German stage.

Schiller and Goethe were now almost inseparable. Together they directed the management of the Weimar Theatre, in which Schiller still entertained ideas of dramatic dignity too lofty for the social life of the moderns. Still did his manhood desire that for which his boyhood had been destined — the vocation of the Preacher; — and the stage still but suggested to him the office of the pulpit. "The pulpit and the stage are the only places for us," said he. He loved the Theatre; it was the sole public entertainment he habitually frequented. He was fond of the society of actors. He used to invite them to supper at the Stadthause, after the first, or even a more than usually successful, performance of one of his pieces. But generally, on returning from the Theatre, his mind was excited, and his emulation fired: And the midnight lamp at Weimar, as at Jena, attested that prodigious energy, which no infirmity slackened, and no glory could appease.

At this time he purchased a small house on the Esplanade — associated indeed with melancholy auspices: the same day he entered it his mother died. He felt in this affliction the rupture of the last tie of youth. He wrote to his sister — "Ah, dear Sister, so both the beloved Parents are gone from us, and the oldest bond that fastened us to life is rent! O let us, we three (including his other sister), alone surviving of

our father's house, let us cling yet closer to each other; forget not that thou hast a loving brother. I remember vividly the days of our youth when we were all in all to each other. From that early existence our fate has divided us; but attachment — confidence, remain unchanged — unchangeable."

In his own circle lay his purest and best comfort. He loved to associate himself with the infant sports of his children. Many a time was he found with his boy playing* on the floor. Around him were assembled such friends as Genius rarely finds — men dear alike to his heart, and worthy of his intellect. At the Court he was grown familiar, and, though he frequented it less than his royal friends desired, it was no longer made displeasing to his tastes by the reserve of his earlier pride.

To his intellectual life Goethe had grown necessary, — while his more household friends were his old College acquaintance, Wilhelm von Wolzogen, and Wolzogen's wife, — the eloquent and enthusiastic sister of his own. But, withal, his passion for solitary wanderings was unabated. Often was he seen in the lonely walks of the Park, stopping abruptly to note down his thoughts in his tablets; often seated amidst the gloomy beeches and cypresses that clothe the crags, leading towards the Royal Pleasure House (the Römische Haus), and listening to the murmur of the neighbouring brook.

In 1802 he received from the Emperor of Austria a patent of nobility; it was obtained through the unsolicited influence of the Duke of Weimar. He

* *At the* game called 'Lion and Dog,' on all fours.

esteemed the honour at its just price — not with the vulgar scorn of the would-be cynic, still less with the elation of a vain convert from Republicanism. It pleased "Lolo and the children."

In the following year Madame de Staël visited Weimar, where her unequalled powers of conversation were more appreciated than in London. She herself has, in her 'Allemagne,' given us an interesting sketch of Schiller. He seems at first to have been more startled with the readiness of her powers, than charmed with their brilliancy, or penetrated with their depth. He says of her, not without justice, that her "*Naturel* and her feeling were better than her metaphysics." He is not quite pleased with that French clearness of understanding that made her averse to the Ideal Philosophy, which she believed led only to mysticism and superstition. He asserts somewhat too positively, "for what we call Poetry, she has no sense." He complains that "she can appreciate only in such works, the passionate, the rhetorical, the universal or popular. She does not prize the false, but she does not always recognise the true."

In a subsequent letter to his sister, Schiller appears to have found the illustrious Frenchwoman improved upon acquaintance, for he there expresses his admiration with more cordiality and less reserve. He now finds her a Phenomenon in her sex — for *esprit* and eloquence equalled but by few men — uniting with all the delicacy or finesse, obtained by intercourse with the great world, that rare earnestness and depth of mind obtained by most only through solitude.* In

* In the sixth volume of the 'Correspondence between

truth, whatever were the errors of Madame de Staël, there was in her character and her genius, a genuine nobleness akin to Schiller's; and though much of her fame, founded on her conversational eloquence, passed away with herself, her works still attest that union of imagination with intellect — enthusiasm with sense, which is never found but in minds of a great order, and in hearts which may indeed be misled by passion, but in which honesty and goodness are as instincts.

Goethe and Schiller,' and in Goethe's own 'Tag- und Jahres-Heft,' we may nevertheless perceive that Madame de Staël was to both these illustrious Germans somewhat too oppressively brilliant and loquacious — somewhat approaching occasionally to that social infliction for which we have no phrase so expressive as that which one of our most eminent Englishmen somewhat bluntly applied to her: — "The cleverest woman in the world for such a bore, and the greatest bore in the world for so clever a woman."

CHAPTER XII.

'Wilhelm Tell' — Ill health — Last sickness — Death — Burial.

And now, in that mysterious circle in which the life of genius so frequently appears to move, Schiller, nearing the close of his career, returned to the inspirations with which it had commenced. His first rude Drama had burned with the wild and half-delirious fever of Liberty; — Liberty, purified and made rational, gave theme and substance to his last. The euthanasia of the genius which had composed 'The Robbers,' was the 'Wilhelm Tell.' Goethe has observed, indeed, that, although the idea of freedom runs through all the works of Schiller, the earlier embodied the physical freedom, the later the ideal. But this cannot fairly be regarded as the distinction between 'The Robbers' and 'Wilhelm Tell.' It is no ideal liberty for which the simple mountaineers, whom Schiller has drawn in outlines so large and muscular, aspire and struggle; it is physical, practical, homely liberty — liberty of life and soil. It is this very practicability which really divides the 'Tell' from 'The Robbers:' in the last heaves the perturbed sigh for a social revolution, — for some liberty contrary to all the forms and the very substance of the organised world; it is an unreasoning passion that would risk a chaos for the chance that again may go forth the words — "Let there be light!" But in 'Tell' the idea of liberty, intense and visible in itself, is yet cir-

cumscribed to the narrowest possible boundaries; it is but the struggle of an honest and universal people for independence, without one whisper of ambition, without one desire of revenge: it is a revolution portrayed in an anti-revolutionary spirit; throughout the whole breathes the condemnation of the French anarchy; it is an evoking of the true Florimel, that, beside her living and human Beauty, the false Florimel may dissolve into snow.*

In the spring of 1804 Schiller visited Berlin, at which city he was received with signal honours; in July we find him at Jena, where, while his wife was happily confined of her youngest daughter, his constitution was severely shaken by a feverish cold. He suffered much and frequently during the rest of the year, but his mental activity was undiminished: besides some of his minor poems, such as 'The Alp Hunter,' and 'The Lay of the Hill,' he was employed on a translation of Racine's 'Phèdre,' and the outline of the tragedy of 'Demetrius,' never completed.

He also, about this time or very little later, conceived the scheme of a Drama which, if suitably executed, would have been, perhaps, the most extraordinary of all his various compositions. The subject was to be the *French Police* — and the plot to have embraced all the evils and abuses of modern civilization. Such a work would indeed be of wide compass and noble uses, but it seems to require the space of a prose fiction, and it is difficult to comprehend how it could have been contracted into the limits, and expressed in the form, of a

* See Schiller's own poem, entitled 'William Tell,' in which his object is briefly and simply explained.

Poetical Drama. It is noticeable, that the singular sympathy with mankind which Schiller possessed, often makes him the father of ideas in others with whom no direct communication can be traced, — the seeds that spring up so lavishly in his humane intellect are dispersed by invisible winds to grow on every soil. This idea of depicting, by literary portraiture, the social ills of Civilization and France, is the main stock of more than half the French writers of our own day. — In Balzac, in Sand, in Sue, in Souvestre, living in the midst of the great whirlpool — are heard the echoes of the Thought which was only breathed inaudibly within the heart of the Poet-student of the tranquil Weimar. And with these recurrences to the peculiar inspirations of his youth, the desire of travel returned prophetically to one about to depart for ever from all earthly homes. He traced routes upon the chart, and spoke of plans and pilgrimages never to be realised.

The reperusal of Herder's 'Ideas on the History of Man' — to which (though he was often largely indebted to it) he did not before do justice* — seems also to have deepened his meditations upon Life, Nature, and Eternal Providence. "Christianity," he said to his gifted sister-in-law, "has stamped a new impression on Humanity, while it revealed a sublimer prospect to the soul." According to this witness, Madame von Wol-

* He said to Madame von Wolzogen, "I know not how it is, but this Book speaks to me after quite a new fashion." Herder and Schiller were not very familiarly intimate — they were *too like each other* for cordial concurrence. Both were essentially earnest, and therefore the differences between them resisted compromise.

zogen — the best, for the most household, evidence — his faith increased as his life drew nearer to its goal.

April, 1805. At length, after many preparatory warnings — visitings, under the name of catarrhal fever, of his constitutional pulmonary disease — Schiller was stricken with his last illness on the 28th of April, 1805; Goethe, who was just recovering from a dangerous illness, called on Schiller, whom he found leaving his house for the theatre. He was too unwell to accompany, too polished to detain him, — they parted for the last time at the threshold of Schiller's door. At the close of the performance Schiller felt himself seized with a feverish attack. A young friend, Henry Voss (son of the celebrated author of 'Luise,' &c.), led him home. On calling the next morning, Voss found him stretched on the sofa between sleep and waking. "Here I lie again!" he said in a hollow voice. As yet, however, he had no conception of his danger; he thought to have discovered a treatment to ensure his recovery. His mind for some days continued clear, and the chief regret he expressed was for the interruption to 'Demetrius.' But on the 6th of May he began to wander: on that day Voss, visiting him again, observed that his eyes were deep sunken; every nerve twitched convulsively: they brought him some lemons, at which he caught eagerly, but laid them down again with a feeble hand. Delirium came on: he raved of soldiers and war; the word Lichtenberg, or Leuchtenburg (the former the name of an author whom he had been lately reading, the latter of a castle which he had long desired to visit), came often to his lips. On the evening of the 7th, his mind recovered; he wished to renew his cus-

tomary conversations with his sister-in-law upon the proper theme and aims of tragedy; she prayed him to keep quiet; he answered, touchingly — "True; now, when no one understands me, and I no more understand myself, it is better that I should be silent." Shortly before, he had concluded some talk on death with these striking words: "Death can be no evil, for it is universal." And now the thought of eternity seems to have occupied his mind in its dreams; for in sleep he exclaimed, "Is that your hell? — is that your heaven?" He then raised his looks, and a soft smile came over his face. It was, perhaps, on awaking from this sleep that he used those memorable words — "Now is life so clear! — so much is made clear and plain!"

In the evening he took some broth, and said to his friends that "he thought that night to sleep well, with God's will." His faithful servant, who watched him, said that, during the night, he recited many lines from 'Demetrius,' and once he called on God to preserve him from a long and tedious death-bed.

On the morning of the 8th of May he woke up composed, and asked for his youngest child. She was brought to him. He took the infant's hand in his own, and gazed at her long with a look of unspeakable sorrow. He then began to weep bitterly, kissed the young face with emotion, and beckoned to them to remove the child.

Towards the evening his sister-in-law approached his bed, and asked how he felt. "Better and better, calmer and calmer," was his answer. He then longed once more to see the sun; they drew aside the curtains; he looked serenely on the setting light. Nature received his farewell.

His sleep that night was disturbed; his mind again wandered; with the morning he had lost consciousness. He spoke incoherently, and chiefly in Latin. His last drink was champagne. Towards three in the afternoon came on the last exhaustion; the breath began to fail. Towards four, he would have called for naphtha, but the last syllable died on his lips; — finding himself speechless, he motioned that he wished to write something; but his hand could trace only three letters, in which was yet recognisable the distinct character of his writing. His wife knelt by his side; he pressed her hand. His sister-in-law stood with the physician at the foot of the bed, applying warm cushions to the cold feet. Suddenly a sort of electric shock came over his countenance; the head fell back; the deepest calm settled on his face. His features were as those of one in a soft sleep.

The news of Schiller's death soon spread through Weimar. The theatre was closed; men gathered together in groups. Each felt as if he had lost his dearest friend. To Goethe, enfeebled himself by long illness, and again stricken by some relapse, no one had the courage to mention the death of his beloved rival. When the tidings came to Henry Meyer, who was with him, Meyer left the house abruptly, lest his grief might escape him. No one else had the courage to break the intelligence. Goethe perceived that the members of his household seemed embarrassed, and anxious to avoid him. He divined something of the fact, and said, at last, "I see, — Schiller must be very ill." That night they overheard him — the serene man, who seemed almost above human affection, who disdained *to reveal* to others whatever grief he felt when his son

died — they overheard Goethe weep! In the morning he said to a friend, "Is it not true that Schiller was very ill yesterday?" The friend (it was a woman) sobbed. "He is dead," said Goethe faintly. "You have said it," was the answer. "He is dead!" repeated Goethe, and covered his eyes with his hands.

The body was dissected; and it was some consolation to the mourners to know that much prolongation of life would have been beyond the art of medicine; the left lung was destroyed, the ventricles of the heart wasted, the liver indurated, the gall-bladder extremely swelled. A son of the great Herder, one of the physicians who examined the body, thought it impossible that, under any circumstances, he could have lived half a year, nor that without great suffering.

Schiller was buried in the night of the 11th of May; twelve young men of good family bore the coffin; the heavens were clouded, but the nightingales sang loud and full. As the train proceeded, the sound of a horse's hoofs was heard; a rider dismounted and followed the procession — it was Wilhelm von Wolzogen, who had heard the fatal news at Naumburg, and hastened to pay the last respect to the remains of his college friend. As the bier was lowered, the wind suddenly scattered the mists, the moon broke forth, and its light streamed upon the coffin. When all was over, the skies were suddenly obscured again.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

CRITICAL SUMMARY.

So, at the early age of forty-five, closed the earthly carèer of Friedrich Schiller. In this brief epitome of his life the reader will not fail to perceive the peculiar distinctions of his character and mind: his singular ardour for Truth; his solemn conviction of the duties of a Poet; his prevailing idea, that the Minstrel should be the Preacher, — that Song is the sister of Religion in its largest sense, — that the Stage is the Pulpit to all sects, all nations, all time. No author ever had more earnestness than Schiller, — his earnestness was the real secret of his greatness; this combination of philosophy and poetry, this harmony between genius and conscience, sprang out of the almost perfect, almost unrivalled equality of proportions which gave symmetry to his various faculties.* With him the imagination and the intellect were so nicely balanced, that one knows not which was the greater; owing, happily, to the extensive range of

* Hence Mr. Carlyle well observes, "Sometimes we suspect that it is the very grandeur of his general powers which prevents us from exclusively admiring his poetic genius. We are not lulled by the siren song of poetry, because her melodies are blended with the clearer, manlier tones of serious reason, and of honest though exalted feeling." — Carlyle's *Life of Schiller.*

his studies, it may be said that, as the intellect was enriched, the imagination was strengthened. Unlike Goethe's poet in 'Wilhelm Meister,' he did not sing "as the bird sings," from the mere impulse of song, but he rather selected Poetry as the most perfect form for the expression of noble fancies and high thoughts. "His conscience was his Muse."* It was thus said of him with truth, "that his poetical excellence was of later growth than his intellectual;" and as the style of Lord Bacon ascended to its sonorous beauty in proportion as his mind became more stored, and his meaning more profound, so the faculty of expression ripened with Schiller in exact ratio to the cultivation of his intellect. His earliest compositions were written with difficulty and labour, and he was slow in acquiring thorough mastery over the gigantic elements of his language. Perhaps this very difficulty (for nothing is so fatal to the mental constitution as that verbal dysentery which we call facility) served both to increase his passion for his art, and to direct it to objects worthy the time and the care which, in his younger manhood, he was compelled to bestow upon his compositions. From this finely-poised adjustment between the reasoning and the imaginative faculties, came the large range of his ambition, not confined to Poetry alone, but extending over the whole field of Letters. We can little appreciate Schiller, if we regard him only as the author of 'Wallenstein,' and the 'Lay of the Bell;' wherever the genius of his age was astir, we see the flight of his wing and the print of his footstep. While, in verse, he has made experiments in almost every combination,

* "Sa conscience étoit sa Muse." — De Staël.

except the epic (and in that he at one time conceived and sketched a noble outline), embracing the drama, the ode, the elegy, the narrative, the didactic, the epigrammatic, and in each achieved a triumph, — in Prose, he has left monuments only less imperishable in the various and rarely reconcilable lands of romance, of criticism, of high-wrought philosophical speculation, and impartial historical research. His romance of the 'Ghost-Seer' is popular in every nation, and, if not perfect of its kind, the faults are those of a super-exuberant intellect, which often impedes, by too discursive a dialogue, the progress of the narrative, and the thread of the events. In this he resembled Godwin rather than Scott. If with 'St. Léon' and 'Caleb Williams' the 'Ghost-Seer' rests in the second class of popularity, it is because, as with them, it requires a reflective mind to seize all its beauties, and yield to all its charms.

In History, if Schiller did not attain to the highest rank, it was not because he wanted the greatest qualities of the historian, but because the subjects he selected did not admit of their full development. But while his works in that direction are amongst the most charming, impartial, and justly popular, of which his nation boasts, he has shown, in the introductory Lecture, delivered by himself at Jena, how grand his estimate of history was. His notions on history are worth whole libraries of history itself.* As a Philoso-

* Of this lecture — "What is universal History, and with what views should it be studied?" — Mr. Carlyle observes justly, "There perhaps has never been in Europe another course of history sketched out on principles so magnificent *and philosophical*." — Carlyle's *Life of Schiller*.

phical Essayist, he is not perhaps very original (though in borrowing from Kant he adds much that may fairly be called his own), and rigid metaphysicians have complained of his vagueness and obscurity.* But his object was not that of severe and logical reasoning; it was to exalt the art to which most of his essays were devoted; to make the great and the pure popular; to educate the populace up to purity and greatness. The ideal philosophy, as professed by Schiller, was, in fact, a kind of mental as well as moral Christianity, which was to penetrate the mind as well as the soul— extend to the arts of man as well as his creeds; to make all nature a temple — all artists priests: Christianity in spirit and effect it was — for its main purpose was that of the Gospel faith, viz., to draw men out of this life into a purer and higher air of being — to wean from virtue the hopes of reward below — to make enjoyment consist in something beyond the senses. What holy meditation was to the saints of old, the ideal of Æsthetic art was to the creed of Schiller. Therefore, his philosophy, in strict accordance with his poetry, was designed not so much to convince as to ennoble; — and, therefore, though in the wide compass of Schiller's works there are passages which would wound the sincere and unquestioning believer; though in his life there were times when he was overshadowed by the doubts that beset inquiry; though, in the ortho-

* Mr. Carlyle, however, estimates the logical precision of Schiller more highly than many of Schiller's own countrymen; and speaks of the Æsthetic Letters as "one of the deepest, most compact pieces of reasoning he is anywhere acquainted with." — *Miscell.* p. 62.

dox and narrower sense of the word Christian, it would be presumptuous to define his sect, or decide on his belief; the whole scope and tendency of his works, taken one with the other, are, like his mind, eminently Christian. No German writer — no writer, not simply theological — has done more to increase, to widen, and to sanctify the reverent disposition that inclines to Faith.

As Schiller's poetry was the flower of his mind, so in his poetry are to be found, in their most blooming produce, all the faculties that led him to philosophy, criticism, and history. In his poetry are reflected all his manifold studies. Philosophy, criticism, and history pour their treasures into his verse. One of a mind so candid, and a life so studious, could not fail to be impressed by many and progressive influences. Schiller's career was one education, and its grades are strongly marked. Always essentially humane, with a heart that beat warmly for mankind, his first works betray the intemperate zeal and fervour of the Revolution which then in its fair outbreak misled not more the inexperience of youth than the sagacity of wisdom; a zeal and fervour increased in Schiller by the formal oppression of academical tyranny;* a nature unusually fiery and impatient; and a taste terribly perverted by the sentiment of Rousseau and the bombast of Klopstock. Friendship, love, indignation, poverty, and solitude, all served afterwards to enrich his mind with the recollection of strong passions and keen sufferings: and, thrown much upon himself, it is his own life and

* Thus Schiller himself calls his 'Robbers' "a monster *produced by* the unnatural union of Genius with Thraldom."

his own thoughts that he constantly reproduces on the stage. The perusal of Shakspeare has less visible and direct influence on his genius than he himself seems to suppose; — the study of History has far more. From the period in which he steadily investigated the past, his characters become more actual; his *Humanity* more rational and serene. He outgrows Rousseau; the revolutionary spirit fades gradually from his mind; he views the vast chronicle of man not with the fervour of a boy, but the calm of a statesman. At this time he begins to deserve the epithet Goethe has emphatically bestowed on him — he becomes '*practical.*' But with the study of history comes the crisis of doubt, the period of his scepticism and his anguish. From this influence he emerged into the purer air, which he never afterwards abandoned, of the Ideal Philosophy. Here he found a solution of his doubts — a religion for his mind. Almost at the same time that his intellect is calmed and deepened by philosophy, his taste acquires harmonious symmetry and repose from the study of the ancient masterpieces. From that period, his style attains its final beauty of simplicity combined with stateliness, and vigour best shown by ease. A happy marriage, a fame assured, an income competent to his wants, serve permanently to settle into earnest and serious dignity a life hitherto restless — an ambition hitherto vague and undefined. Thenceforth he surrenders himself wholly to the highest and purest objects human art can attain. His frame is attacked, his health gone for ever; but the body has here no influence on the mind. Schiller lives in his art; he attains to the ideal existence he has depicted; he becomes the Pure Form, the Archetype, the *Gestalt*, that he has

described in his poem of the 'Ideal and the Actual;' living divorced from the body — in the heavenly fields a spirit amongst the gods. It is now that we trace in his works the influences of two master-minds with which he lived familiarly — William von Humboldt and Goethe.* The first we see in his mystical, typical, and Kantian compositions; the last in the more lucid and genial spirit of his lyrics and his narratives. By degrees, the latter happily prevailed. As Humboldt receded from the scene, and his intercourse with Goethe mellowed, Schiller comes out of the cloud into the light. He recognises the true ideal of art; the clear expression of serene thought; the Grecian Athenè prevailing over the typical Egyptian Naith. The last influence produced on him by profane literature was in the works of Calderon, then just translated; and which, according to the testimony of Goethe, deeply and sensibly impressed him. But he did not survive long enough for that impression to become apparent in his own compositions.

We omit all detailed criticism of Schiller's Dramas; for they have been made more or less familiar to the reader, by various translations, by repeated notices in our popular journals, and by the attention they have received in the biographical work of Mr. Carlyle. Our limits would not permit us to do justice to works requiring lengthened and elaborate consideration, or to

* The intimacy between Goethe and Schiller was the more remarkable, because it was almost purely intellectual. Goethe says, in a conversation with Eckermann, "that there was no necessity for especial friendship between them — *their common* efforts made their noblest bond."

enter into a controversy with other critics, from whom we may differ as to their merits or defects. Briefly, it appears to us, that, like the dramas of many great poets, from Byron up even to Shakspeare, their highest merit is not that purely dramatic. Perhaps of *this* quality there is more in the earlier than the later Tragedies. 'The Robbers' is still upon the whole the most frequently acted of all Schiller's Plays.* Glancing over his riper performances, his grandest, in point of intellect, is 'Wallenstein:' in point of verbal poetry, of music and expression, 'The Bride of Messina' is the loveliest: in point of feeling and conception 'The Maid of Orleans' most engrosses the heart and enlists the fancy. But the one in which Schiller, with the fullest success, emancipates his art from himself — in which his own individuality the least moulds and influences his creations — seems to us the 'Wilhelm Tell.' As his chief merit, whether as Man or Artist, lay in his earnestness, so in that earnestness lay his main defect as a writer for the Stage. He could not, as the stage-writer really ought, reflect indifferently — *veluti in spe-*

* The true test of the *Dramatic* faculty, apart from the Poetical, is its practical adaptability to the stage. A play of very inferior literary merit may keep its hold on the boards, to the exclusion of works infinitely more poetical, by its dramatic qualities; — viz., by the correspondence between the action of its plot and emotions the most generally popular. . . . Hence the vitality on the stage of plays that are almost despised in the library — such as the 'Stranger,' 'Pizarro,' &c. Kotzebue's dramatic talent, as separate from intellectual excellence or poetic inspiration, is positively wonderful, and deserves the minutest study of all practical writers for the stage. Of this, Schiller was fully aware.

culum — vice and virtue* — the mean and the sublime. He could not escape the temptation of placing in the mouths of his characters the sentiments he desired to enforce upon the world — even though the occasion was inappropriate. All his favourite characters talk too much — and too much as Schiller thought and Schiller felt. Morally one of the least selfish of men, — intellectually he is one of the most egotistical. Who that held the doctrine that the Dramatist, the Poet, should be the Preacher, could fail to be so? He loved Truth too much to suffer her to be silent, whenever he had occasion to make her oracles be heard. The complex varieties — the sinuous windings of human character, are, for the most part, without the pale of his conscientious and stately genius. He thus avoids (at least in his later works) the vulgar reproach attached to Goethe, and which might with equal truth be urged against Shakspeare, viz. that he makes error amiable, and clothes crime with charm. His characters are, for the most part, embodiments of great principles and great truths, rather than the flexible and multiform representations of human nature, which, while idealised into poetry, still render the creations of Shakspeare so living and distinct.

Schiller is thus, on the whole, greater as a Poet than a Dramatist — so, indeed, is Shakspeare, but from entirely different and opposite causes: Shakspeare, from the exquisite subtlety of his imagination, which,

* Thus Madame de Staël well observes, "that he lived, spoke, and acted as if the wicked did not exist; and when in his works he described them, it was with more exaggeration *and less depth* than if he had really known them."

in a Caliban, an Ariel, a Titania, escapes the grossness of representation; Schiller, from too statuelike a rigidity and hardness: we do not see the veins at play beneath his marble.

It is in the Collection of his Minor Poems that Schiller's true variety is best seen — a variety not of *character*, but of thought, of sentiment, of fancy, of diction, and of metre. In those poems are the confessions of his soul, as well as the exercises of his genius. For, with a little modification, what Jean Paul said of Herder, may be said of Schiller, "that he was less a Poet than a Poem," — and therefore, all his poetry should be studied as illustrations of the Human Poem — Schiller himself!

Any comparison between Goethe and Schiller would be, and has been, but a futile attempt at comparing dissimilarities.* We shall waste no time in attempting to show where one is greater or the other less. Brothers they were in life — let them shine together in equal lustre — the immortal Dioscuri — twin stars! Nor shall we touch upon those theories of art which the mention of Schiller and Goethe calls into discussion amongst the metaphysical critics of their country. We cannot invent a set of school terms to prove, without farther discussion, that one poem is great because objective — another not so great because subjective. Beauty escapes all technical definitions; the art of estimating beauty — viz. *criticism* — must follow the

* Goethe himself is reported to have said, "The Germans are great fools to quarrel which should take the prior rank, Schiller or myself — they ought only to be too happy that they have us both."

genius it would examine through all its capricious windings, and admire equally, Milton where subjective, — and where objective, Shakspeare.

There is a class of poets in which self-consciousness is scarcely perceptible; another in which it is pervading and intense. In the former class, Shakspeare and Homer tower pre-eminent; in the latter, we recognise Dante and Milton — Schiller, Byron, and Burns.

To the last two, Schiller, in some attributes of his genius, bears a greater resemblance* than perhaps to any of his own countrymen; resembling them in the haunting sense of individuality — in the power of blending interest for the poet with delight in the poem — in the subordination of sentiment to feeling — in the embodiment of what is peculiar in forms the most widely popular; — resembling them in these points, differing from them no less widely in others, according as the different modifications of life, habits, education, heart, and conscience, differ in the English noble, the German student, the Scotch peasant. But in all three there is this characteristic of a common tribe — their poetry expresses themselves. To borrow the idea of Schiller himself, they seek truth in the heart within — others in the world without, — by each order of inquirer can truth equally be found: Or, to avail ourselves again of Schiller's accurate and noble distinction, whether light breaks into the variety of colours in which its individuality is lost, or unites the colours into a single shimmer, it is still the light which vivifies and illumes the world.

* Goethe himself has remarked the similarity in some *points between* Byron and Schiller.

Mr. Carlyle quotes, with some approval, a dogmatic assertion, "that readers till their twenty-fifth year usually prefer Schiller; after their twenty-fifth year, Goethe."* If Herder and Novalis are right in their belief that the true elements of wisdom and poetry are found freshest and purest in the young, this is no disparagement to Schiller. It is, certainly, only in proportion as the glow for all that is noble in thought and heroic in character fades from the weaker order of mind, amidst the cavils, disgusts, and scepticism of later life, that the halo around the genius of Schiller, which is but a reflection of all that is noble and heroic, wanes also into feebler lustre. For the stronger nature, which still "feels as the enthusiast, while it learns to see as the world-wise," ** . . . there is no conceivable reason why Schiller should charm less in maturity than youth.

Finally, as, in the life of Schiller, the student may gather noble and useful lessons of the virtue of manly perseverance — of the necessity of continued self-cultivation — of the alliance between labour and success — between honesty and genius; — so in his Poems will be found, living and distinct, a great and forcible intellect ever appealing to the best feelings — ever exalting those whom it addresses — ever intent upon strengthening man in his struggles with his destiny, and uniting with a golden chain the outer world and the inner to the celestial throne.

* Carlyle's Miscellanies, vol. III. p. 65.
** Schiller, 'Light and Warmth.'

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